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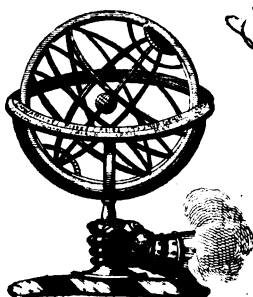
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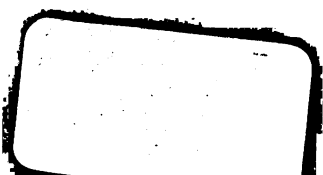


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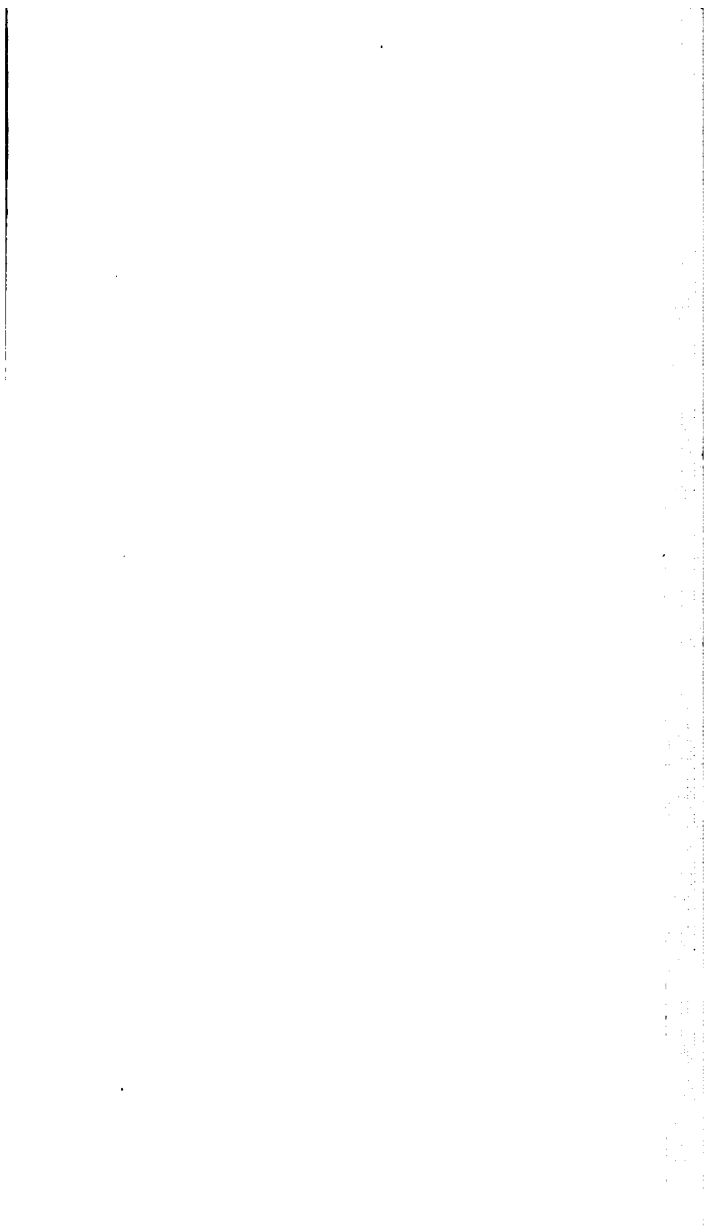


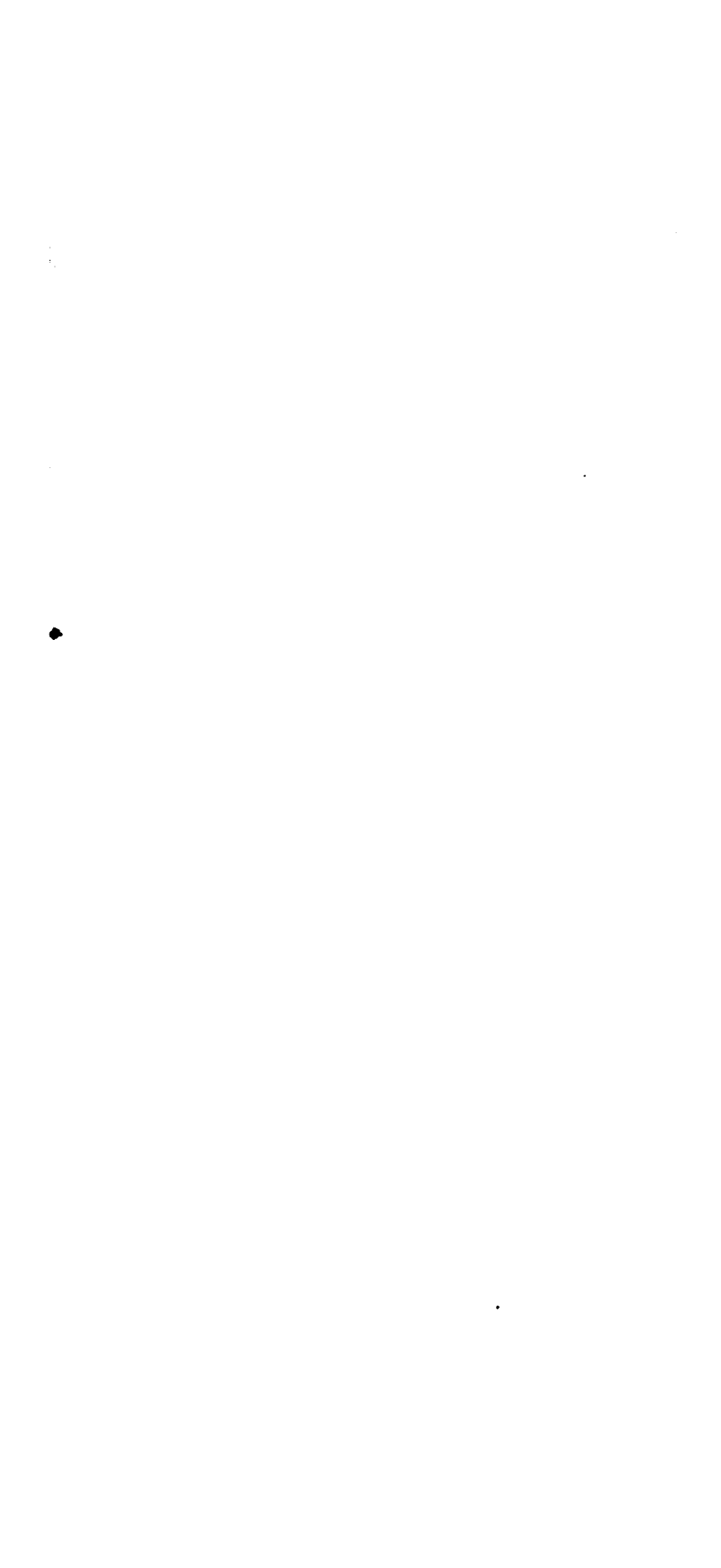
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**LETTERS AND ESSAYS.**



LETTERS  
AND  
ESSAYS  
IN PROSE AND VERSE.

BY RICHARD SHARP.

THIRD EDITION

LONDON:

EDWARD MOXON, DOVER STREET.

MDCCCXXXIV.

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Author of the following pages hopes to  
ask for telling the reader, that they were  
during a few short intervals of leisure,  
he has employed rather in deriving  
joy and amusement from the works of  
than in attempting to afford either by

all of his Letters having been published  
his knowledge, he has thought it best  
a few others, both in prose and verse.

of course, in the possession of his  
they might (however insignificant) ap-  
after, when he could no longer correct  
and the dates of some will show that he  
me to lose.

“Vesper \* \* admonuit.”



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# LETTERS AND ESSAYS,

&c. &c.

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TO THE REV. JOHN FELL.

*London, 2nd February, 1784.*

You will receive, in this and another frank, my preface to your Grammar, which I hope you will approve. If you do so, pray be good enough to return it by the coach; for the book itself is already printed; and, as you well know, by sad experience, the Devil is a most importunate Dun.

The sentiments I am sure you will not dislike, but I am far from satisfied with the expression, and I must beg you to have no mercy.

Our common object is to do the best we can

towards preventing the style of the next race of authors from being tainted by the pedantry of the present. Indeed Johnsonism is now become almost a general disease.

In the lighter kinds of writing this affectation is particularly disagreeable, and I am convinced that in the gravest, aye! and in the sublimest passages, the simple terms and the idioms of our language often add a grace beyond the reach of scholarship, increasing, rather than diminishing, the elegance, as well as the spirit of the diction.

“ Utinam et verba in usu quotidiano posita minùs  
“ timeremus ”

“ He that would write well,” says Roger Ascham,  
“ must follow the advice of Aristotle, to speak as  
“ the common people speak, and to think as the  
“ wise think ”

In support of this opinion many of the examples cited by you are amusing, as well as convincing. The following from a great author may be added—

“ Is there a God to swear by, and is there none to  
“ believe in, none to trust to? ”

What becomes of the force and simplicity of this short sentence, when turned into the clumsy English which schoolmasters indite, and which little boys can construe? "Is there a God by whom to swear, and is there none in whom to believe, none to whom to pray?"

The Doctor is a great writer and is deservedly admired, but he should not be imitated. His gigantic strength may perhaps require a vocabulary that would encumber feebler thoughts: but it is very comical to see Mr. B. and Dr. P. strutting about in Johnson's bulky clothes; as if a couple of Lilliputians had bought their great coats at a rag-fair in Brobdignag.

Cowley, Dryden, Congreve, and Addison are our best examples, for Middleton is not free from Gallicisms. Mr. Burke's speeches and pamphlets (although the style is too undisciplined for a model) abound with phrases in which homeliness sets off elegance, and ease adds grace to strength.

How your neighbour, the "dilectus Iapis" will smile to hear Milton's practice appealed to! Yet

what can he say to the following specimens, taken at random while I am now writing?

- "Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool  
 "In every street? Do they not say how well  
 "Are come upon him his deserts?"  
 "Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread"  
 "Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake  
 "My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.  
 "At distance I forgive thee—go with that"  
 "Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring  
 "Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost"  
 "I was all ear,  
 "And took in strains that might create a soul  
 "Under the ribs of death"  
 "So! farewell hope; but with hope farewell fear,  
 "Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;  
 "Evil be thou my good"

Shakespeare I need not quote, for he never writes ill, excepting when he means to be very fine, and very learned.

Fortunately our admirable translation of the Scriptures abounds with these native terms of expression, and it is admitted to be almost as pure an authority for English as for doctrine.

I begin, already, to look forward to my annual week's holiday at Thaxted, where I shall hear you expound them for both purposes.

---

ON ENGLISH STYLE.\*

DURING the last thirty or forty years, English literature has been enriched with many valuable compositions in prose and in verse. Many wise and learned men have made use of our language in communicating their sentiments concerning all the important branches of science and art. All kinds of subjects have been skilfully treated in it, and many works of taste and genius have been written with great and well-deserved success: yet perhaps it will appear, upon a careful view of these compositions, that whatsoever credit their authors are entitled to, for acuteness of understanding, strength

\* Printed in 1784 as the Preface to an "Essay on English Grammar"

of imagination, delicacy of taste, or energy of passion, there are but few of them that deserve the praise of having expressed themselves in a pure and genuine strain of *English*. In general they have preferred such a choice, and arrangement of words, as an early acquaintance with some other language, and the neglected study of their own, would naturally incline them to. Sometimes also we find them expressing a mean opinion of their native tongue. This, however, I am the less inclined to wonder at, as I am convinced that those only can speak of our language without respect, who are ignorant of its nature and qualities. Perhaps it is as capable of receiving any impressions that a man of taste and genius may chuse to stamp upon it, and is as easily moulded into all the various forms of passion, elegance, and sublimity, as any language, ancient or modern.

Some men of eminence in letters, having seen how well the fashionable world has succeeded in imitating the manners of the French, have endeavoured to raise themselves into reputation by importing their

forms of speech, and, not contented with the good old English idiom, have dressed out their works in all the tawdriness of French phraseology.

But this injudicious fashion of adulterating our language with foreign mixtures, is more especially the case with respect to the Latin, to the laws of which, many of our writers, and indeed some also of our grammarians, have so strenuously endeavoured to subject our language, that Brown's prophecy, in the preface to his "Vulgar Errors," is at length come to pass, and "we are now forced to study Latin, in order to understand English." The complaint is not new, though the practice complained of is now become more frequent, and more extensive than ever. Our elegant and idiomatic satirist ridicules that

" ———— easy Ciceronian style

" So Latin, yet so English all the while"

POPE'S EPILOGUE TO SATIRES.

Not only Latin words, but Latin idioms, are now invading us with so much success, that, do what we can, I fear we must submit to the yoke, and, as our



country was formerly compelled to become a province of the Roman empire, so must our language sink at last into a dialect of the Roman tongue. This event has been much hastened of late years. Some men, whose writings do honour to their country and to mankind, have, it must be confessed, written in a style that no Englishman will own, a sort of anglicized Latin, and chiefly distinguished from it by a trifling difference of termination: yet so excellent are these works, in other respects, that a man might deserve well of the Public who would take the trouble of translating them into English. As I do not notice these alterations in our language, in order to commend them, I shall not produce any particular instances. I shall content myself with supporting the fact by the evidence of a truly respectable critic, now living. In the preface to his excellent Dictionary, he says, “ so far have I been from any  
 “ care to grace my page with modern decorations,  
 “ that I have studiously endeavoured to collect my  
 “ examples and authorities from the writers before  
 “ the Restoration, whose works I regard as the *wells*

“ *of English undefiled* ; as the pure sources of genuine  
 “ diction. Our language, for almost a century, has  
 “ by the concurrence of many causes, been gradually  
 “ departing from its ancient Teutonic character, and  
 “ deviating towards a Gallic structure and phraseo-  
 “ logy ; *from which it ought to be our endeavour to*  
 “ *recal it* ; by making our ancient volumes the  
 “ groundwork of our style, admitting among the  
 “ additions of later times, only such as may supply  
 “ real deficiencies ; such as are readily adopted by the  
 “ genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with  
 “ our native idioms ”

In his preface to the works of Shakespeare, we  
 also find the following very applicable sentiments :  
 “ I believe there is in every nation, a style that  
 “ never becomes obsolete, a certain mode of phra-  
 “ seology so consonant and congenial to the prin-  
 “ ciples of its respective language, as to remain  
 “ settled and unaltered ”

“ The polite are always catching modish inno-  
 “ vations, and the learned depart from established  
 “ forms of speech, in hopes of finding or making

“ better ; those who wish for distinction, *forsake the*  
 “ *vulgar when the vulgar is right* ; but there is a  
 “ conversation above grossness and below refinement,  
 “ where propriety resides, and where Shakespeare  
 “ seems to have gathered his comic dialogue. He  
 “ is therefore more agreeable to the ears of the pre-  
 “ sent age than any other author equally remote, and  
 “ among his other excellencies deserves to be studied  
 “ as one of the original masters of our language.”

These passages I have inserted, because such a  
 testimony from this great man will at least be  
 thought *impartial* by every person acquainted with  
 the characteristics of his style.

The alterations in our language here mentioned,  
 are certainly not for the better ; they give the  
 phraseology a disgusting air of study and formality ;  
 they have their source in affectation, not in taste ;  
 yet novelty has its attractions, and what Quintilian  
 says of Seneca's works, may be fairly applied to our  
 later English writers : “ In eloquendo corrupta plera-  
 “ que, et eo perniciosissima, quod abundabant *dulci-*  
 “ *bus vitiis.*” Though these exotic terms and phrases

are not really better than our home-bred English ; yet their newness gives them a spurious sort of beauty ; though they do not really enrich the dress of our thoughts, yet they are a kind of tinsel ornaments, admired because they glitter and stare. The writers I allude to may perhaps have succeeded in giving our language a higher polish, but have they not also curtailed and impoverished it ? Perhaps they *may* have cleared it of some cant terms, low phrases, and awkward constructions ; but what they may have gained in accuracy have they not lost in variety ? Have they not reduced all kinds of composition to an insipid uniformity ? Is not the spirit of our language lowered, its freedom cramped, and its range of expression narrowed ?

I shall not be required to prove this opinion by such of my readers as are acquainted with the works of Hooker, Taylor, Swift, Pope, Addison, and Dryden, with the prose of Cowley, and with Shakespeare's "immortal wit." However, the prevalence of fashion is so strong, that all resistance to this adulteration of our language may be ineffectual ; and it is well

worthy of notice, that every polite nation, hitherto distinguished in literature, has, after a certain period, declined in taste and purity of composition. The later Greek writers are known by the diminutive term, "Græculi," and the Augustan age denotes an æra before the Latin tongue was vitiated and spoiled by vain refinements and affected innovations. To prevent a similar decline of the French language, the French Academy has endeavoured to render it at once more pure and more durable; but the republic of letters is a true republic, in its disregard to the arbitrary decrees of usurped authority. Perhaps such an institution would do still less with us. Our critics are allowed to petition, but not to command; and why should their power be enlarged? The laws of our speech, like the laws of our country, should breathe a spirit of liberty; they should check licentiousness, without restraining freedom.

The most effectual method of preserving our language from decay, and preventing a total disregard to the Saxon part of it, is to change our present mode of education.

Children are generally taught the grammar of a foreign tongue before they understand that of their own ; but if they chance to be instructed in the principles of their native tongue, they learn them from some system that does little more than fetter it with the rules of construction drawn from another language. Dr. Lowth, in his preface, has taken notice of this circumstance.

“ A grammatical study of our own language makes no part of the ordinary method of instruction which we pass through in our childhood, and it is very seldom that we apply ourselves to it afterwards.”

“ Yet the want of it will never be effectually supplied by any other advantages whatsoever.— Much practice in the polite world, and a general acquaintance with the best authors are good helps ; but alone will hardly be sufficient ; we have writers who have enjoyed these advantages in their full extent, and yet cannot be recommended as models of an accurate style—Much less then will, what is commonly called learning, serve the purpose ; that

“ is, a critical knowledge of ancient languages, and  
 “ much reading of ancient authors. The greatest  
 “ critic and most able grammarian of the last age,  
 “ was frequently at a loss in matters of ordinary  
 “ use and common construction in his own vernacular  
 “ idiom.”

The design of the following work is to teach the grammar of the *English* tongue; not by arbitrary and capricious rules; and much less by such as are taken from the customs of other languages; but by a methodical collection of observations, comprising all those current phrases and forms of speech, which are to be found in our best and most approved writers and speakers. It is certainly the business of a grammarian to find out, and not to make, the laws of a language. In this work the Author does not assume the character of a legislator, but appears as a faithful compiler of the scattered laws. He does not presume to regulate the customs and fashions of our speech, but only notes and collects them.

It matters not what causes these customs and fashions owe their birth to; the moment they

become general, they are laws of the language, and a grammarian can only remonstrate, how much soever he disapprove. From his opinions and precepts an appeal may always be made to the tribunal of use, as to the supreme authority and last resort, since in language as in law, "*communis error facit jus*" and custom has a prescriptive right to talk bad grammar. By the general consent of a nation, certain sounds and certain written signs, together with their inflections and combinations, come to be used as denoting certain ideas and their relations; and the man that chuses to deviate from the custom of his country in expressing his thoughts, is as ridiculous as though he were to walk the streets in a Spanish cloak, or a Roman toga. Perhaps he might say, these garments are more elegant and more commodious than a suit of English broad cloth; but I believe this excuse would hardly protect him from derision and disgrace.

Besides the principal purpose for which this little book was written (that of instructing youth), I hope the perusal of it may not be useless to those that



are already acquainted with polite literature. Much reading and good company are supposed to be the best method of getting at the niceties and elegancies of a language; but this road is long and irksome. It is certainly a safer and a readier way to sail by compass than to rove at random, and any person who wished to become acquainted with the various productions of nature, would do better to study the systems of our best naturalists, than to go wandering about from land to land, lighting here upon one, and there upon another, merely out of a desire to see them all. I hope also this book may be useful to those foreigners that wish to learn the English tongue, it being intended to contain all our most usual Anglicisms, all those phrases and peculiarities, which form the characteristics of our language. I will not take upon me to say that we have no grammar capable of teaching a foreigner to read our authors; but this I am sure of, that we have none by which he can be enabled to understand our conversation.

ADDITION, 1834.—EXTRACT OF A LETTER FROM MR. BURKE  
TO MR. MURPHY.

“THERE is a style which daily gains ground  
“amongst us, which I should be sorry to see farther  
“advanced by the authority of a writer of your just  
“reputation. The tendency of the mode to which  
“I allude is, to establish two very different idioms  
“amongst us, and to introduce a marked distinction  
“between the English that is written, and the  
“English that is spoken. The practice, if grown a  
“little more general, would confirm this distemper,  
“(such I must think it) in our language, and perhaps  
“render it incurable.

“From this feigned manner, or falsetto, as I think  
“the musicians call something of the same sort in  
“singing, no one modern historian, Robertson only  
“excepted, is perfectly free. It is assumed, I know,  
“to give dignity and variety to the style; but what-  
“ever success the attempt may sometimes have,  
“it is always obtained at the expense of purity,

“and of the graces that are natural and appropriate  
 “to our language. It is true, that when the exigence  
 “calls for auxiliaries of all sorts, and common lan-  
 “guage becomes unequal to the demands of extra-  
 “ordinary thoughts, something ought to be conceded  
 “to the necessities which make ‘Ambition Virtue;’  
 “but the allowances to necessities ought not to grow  
 “into a practice. These portents and prodigies ought  
 “not to grow too common.”

---

TO MR. HENDERSON.

*London, 1785.*

I WENT, as I promised, to see the new “HAMLET,” whose provincial fame had excited your curiosity as well as mine.

There has not been such a first appearance since yours; yet Nature, though she has been bountiful to him in figure and feature, has denied him a voice — of course he could not exemplify his own direction

for the players to "*speaking the speech trippingly on the tongue*" and, now and then, he was as deliberate in his delivery as if he had been reading prayers, and had waited for the response.

He is a very handsome man, almost tall and almost large, with features of a sensible, but fixed and tragic cast: his action is graceful, though somewhat formal, which you will find it hard to believe, yet it is true. Very careful study appears in all he says and all he does; but there is more singularity and ingenuity, than simplicity and fire. Upon the whole, he strikes me rather as a finished French performer, than as a varied and vigorous English actor, and it is plain he will succeed better in heroic, than in natural and passionate tragedy. Excepting in serious parts, I suppose he will never put on the sock.

You have been so long without a "brother near the throne" that it will perhaps benefit you to be obliged to bestir yourself in Hamlet, Macbeth, Lord Townley, and Maskwell; but in Lear, Richard, Falstaff, and Benedict, you have nothing to fear,

notwithstanding the known fickleness of the public and its love of novelty.

I think I have heard you remark (what I myself have observed in the History of the Stage), that periodical changes have taken place in the taste of the audience, or at least in the manner of the great performers. Sometimes the natural and spirited mode has prevailed, and then the dignified and declamatory. BETTERTON, eminent both in comedy and tragedy, appears to have been an instance of the first. Then came BOOTH and QUIN, who were admired for the last. GARRICK followed, restoring or re-inventing the best manner, which you have also adopted so fortunately and successfully. Mr. KEMBLE will be compelled, by the hoarse monotony of his voice, to rely upon the conventional stateliness that distinguished Garrick's predecessors, and which is now carried to inimitable perfection by his accomplished sister.

You see that I have been much amused by this town-made incident, a first-appearance ; but, believe me, I had much rather have been angling with you

at Marlow, even though without a bite. I had rather laugh at your "quips and cranks" than hook the largest perch in the Thames.

---

TO THE REV. JOHN FELL.

*January 1, 1788.*

My cold, my obstinate cold, has been so exasperated by some Christmas-indiscretions, as to be malicious enough to confine me to the house, and I foresee but little chance of my sleeping under your roof for many nights to come. I must therefore reply to your questions by the penny post, although what I have to say is not worth a farthing.

First, however, let me wish you many many happy new years in the discharge of your untried duties ; for I reckon your experience at Thaxted as of little or no service to you at Homerton. It is a far more difficult task to teach those who are to be teachers themselves, than to correct the exercises of a few little

lay-boys. Now your business is very serious. I know that it is the high office of another to instruct the students in theology ; but I am certain that their residence with a man of your learning, energy, and reputation, will render your influence, in forming their characters and their creed, much more effectual than the most orthodox lectures on the thirty-nine articles. To speak out too, he appears to me to be but a dry sort of a wet-nurse ; and besides, he may, perhaps, like some of his brother professors, fall fast asleep in his chair, and do neither good nor harm. To unlearn is harder than to learn, and the Grecian flute-player was right in requiring double fees from those pupils who had been taught by another master. "I am rubbing their father out of my children as fast as I can," said a clever widow of rank and fashion.

It is fortunate for you, in some respects, that the young people in your interesting family are not the spoilt children of rich or distinguished parents. If Fenelon did succeed, as it is recorded he did, in educating the Dauphin, his success was little less

than a miracle. How can any man, though of advanced age and of high reputation, perhaps also of a sacred profession and of elevated station, be expected to preserve any useful authority over a child (probably a wayward little animal,) if he, the tutor, must always address the pupil by his title, or at least must never forget that he is heir to a throne?

I do not deny that the habits of the young who have been brought up in poverty may present obstacles of another kind; and I believe that some, who enter the ministry, may be tempted by the desire of being reckoned gentlemen. This jealous and irritable sort of vanity calls both for tenderness and for correction.

Education cannot do all that Helvetius supposes, but it can do much. “Elle fait danser l’ours.” It is said that some insects take the colour of the leaf that they feed upon.—“I was common clay till roses “were planted in me” says some aromatic earth in an eastern fable.

What passed at our hospitable bookseller’s table,



last week, naturally excited your attention ; and I will, as you desire, try to borrow the Swiss gentleman's letter respecting education from Dr. Knox. Emulation has been at all times relied upon as a chief instrument in education, and now comes a philosopher of great experience who discourages the use of it. Certainly, if the mere passion for truth could do the business, if young men could be expected to fall desperately in love with "the beauty of theorem," the results would be of exceeding value, both in kind and in degree. Can this be trusted to ? Alas, no !

One practice, however, can be reformed, that of giving prizes and commendations only to those who get on the fastest. 'Tis the endeavour, the struggle, the obedience, that should be praised and rewarded. Then a child will not be disheartened by difficulties, nor humiliated by failure ; because, when he does his best, he will be sure of approbation. Otherwise, as soon as he is passed in the race by his competitors, he will be inclined to lie down in the dust, with his little heart full of despair, and perhaps full of envy too.

There was one observation which we agreed in—  
I never did expect much from merely didactic lectures. Knowledge cannot be truly ours till we have appropriated it by some operation of our own minds. The best writers on property in land attribute that right to the first proprietor's having blended his own labour with the soil. Something like this is true of intellectual attainments. For example, surely the best mode of teaching moral philosophy would be by giving each pupil a set of questions: such as—

“Why should truth be spoken?”

“Why should a promise be kept, and a debt paid?”

“What is the meaning of the word *ought*?”

The learners should, indeed, be told that many different answers have been given in all ages, and the most celebrated as well as the most satisfactory authors should be pointed out to them. But they should select their own answers: after being encouraged to reflect as well as to read.

Behold what you have brought upon yourself by the grave and urgent air of your enquiries, and by

not waiting till we could take a turn together in your garden of gardens; where “cum una, meherculè, “ambulatiuncula, atque uno sermone nostro, omnes “provinciae fructus non confero” addicted as I am to the distant mountains.

---

TO MR. CUMBERLAND.

*London, 18th Dec. 1798.*

I AM not only glad, but flattered that you have listened to my suggestion, and that you really intend to write your own life. There are many motives to encourage you, beside those I mentioned. The mere incidents are not common, and you have always lived with eminent persons, whose characters are still the objects of public curiosity. The progress of your own mind, related circumstantially, will not only be interesting, but instructive, especially to young men; and you cannot but feel some pleasure in looking back on the steps that conducted you from

the Westminster-school exercises, to the "West Indian," and the "Wheel of Fortune."

The Spanish Mission too was important, and in respect to that, you justly complain of ill-treatment (as Mr. Pitt too tardily confessed), but you seem on no other occasion to have been pelted with calumnies. Is not this being very fortunate, considering how the world abounds with envious libellers? I suppose you have escaped in consequence chiefly of abandoning politics as a profession.

What a coachful was that which entered Dublin with the lord lieutenant, with you as his private, and William Gerard Hamilton, as his public secretary, and Edmund Burke as Hamilton's! Your temptations must have been strong to continue in public life, and, had you yielded to them, you would now be a rich, perhaps a titled man; but, judging from your nature, and from your love of letters, I should say that you would not have been a happy one.

Those who engage in party-struggles must pray, as the Spartans did, for the fortitude to bear in-

justice. Indeed this is necessary for all men, in every condition, and luckily we are taught early, by a common child's play, what we are to expect in the world, where, though D deserves it, G gets it.

You will pardon me for saying also, that it was impossible for you to be quite certain that your talents were precisely those best fitted for common official occupations. Vespasian was a wretched prætor, though he was a great emperor, and, near the ground, a swallow can fly faster than an eagle. Perhaps you foresaw that you could not be quite complaisant enough in changing your sentiments with your interest, and that you could not be always quite ready to ring in every new prime minister as impartially as the clapper of a bell. Nor can it be a very easy task to preserve the proper respect for high personages, when seeing them familiarly, since, contrary to the rules of perspective, they commonly seem greatest at a distance.

Probably you might not exactly relish the pleasure of trying to persuade a popular assembly of what

you did not believe yourself, and, you must have seen enough of a court to know that a confidence in good intentions and good abilities will not ensure continuance in place. Louis XV. used to call Quesnai "my thinker" but he never employed his "thinker" in the government, and Louis XVI. is known to have said "there are only M. de Turgot and myself that really love the people," and the King was soon compelled to dismiss Turgot, by his minister Maurepas. What wonder? Yet it may be but charitable to suppose that in both instances, their Majesties were unwilling to expose such honest men to the temptations of a court. In that elevated region there are other means of obtaining favour, and some courtiers know this so well that, like a cunning candidate for the popedom, they even pretend to infirmities which they do not feel.

There is another and a grievous objection to an official life in the uncertainty of its tenure, which naturally tempts even honest men to provide a permanent income, by any means that can be devised, and if a man allows himself to fill his own cup

at the leakings of the public purse, he must be a little blind when others are doing the same.

“ *Parcit*

“ *Cognatis maculis similis fera* ”

In this respect the times have mended greatly, especially of late, though Lord Chatham first set the example of disdaining to govern by petty larceny. Formerly the profits of office were sometimes enormous. Old Audley of the Court of Wards, being examined, owned, “ my place is worth 10,000*l.* a-year to an honest man, 50,000*l.* to one willing to go to purgatory, and the ‘ Lord knows what ’ to one not afraid of the devil.”

You have ever breathed a purer air, both physical and moral, at Tunbridge Wells, than you could have found at St. James’s or in Parliament, and have been more agreeably, perhaps more usefully, employed in writing your essays and dramas, and in anglicising Aristophanes.

## TO THE SAME.

*London, November, 1799.*

I AM sorry that I could not recollect where that reprehensible passage is to be found, which \* \* \* has transferred into the comedy that we saw together last week—It occurs in the profligate romance of La Clos. What little merit it has is in its brilliancy, and the antithetical expression has been copied as well as the mean and licentious sentiment. No wonder that

“ The Terence of England, the mender of hearts ”

was even more disgusted than the audience, though they hissed, God bless them ! most virtuously.

This diseased appetite for praise, even from the weak and unprincipled, has become both prevalent and contagious ; but such a man as this dramatic author, should not be keeping such bad company and catching so nauseous a disorder. You think,



I know, that he has it in the natural way and is more likely to give than to take infection. Be this as it may, I hope that his life will not be shortened, as Rivarol supposes the days of the Archbishop of Thoulouse were, by swallowing one of his own poisonous maxims.

It may be truly said of more than one fashionable writer, that they wish to render vice agreeable, and of others that they strive to make it respectable. The first are hurried on by levity, but the last by a criminal passion for the reputation of originality, though unable to gain it by honest means. Poetry has been called a collection of hymns to virtue, and it is, therefore, not very difficult to be *original*, at the expense of attacking honesty, religion, common-sense, and decency.

There seems to be something like genius in maintaining that "speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts," that "none but fools will throw away their money in paying their debts," that "a man need not marry so long as his friends do," and, in short, that "morality is the blunder

“made by fools, to the advantage of the clever  
 “fellows, who enjoy at once the pleasure of cheating  
 “and of laughing at them”

There is another kind of quackery in literature, not so mischievous, but quite as mean—attention, it has been found, may be excited and, sometimes admiration, by mere singularity, and credit is given to a man for universal reading, who has only looked at the less-known works. Two remarkable instances I have, myself, seen of great notoriety arising from this paltry device. Those are supposed to be well-acquainted with the turnpike roads to knowledge, who talk familiarly of the cross-ways and bye-paths. Plotinus they quote, but not Plato, Silius Italicus, but not Virgil, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, but not Bacon, nor Locke, Mandeville but not Addison, nor Clarke. These are despicable contrivances for gaining a little fame under false pretences (a sort of literary swindling) but, so got, it quickly withers and dies. Yet the public is ever ready to be cheated again and again by the same arts, forgetting that more talent, aye! and more

real invention too may be shown in throwing new lights on ancient wisdom, than in contradicting established truths, or insulting venerated principles.

You know a celebrated writer, and I have the pleasure of knowing him also, who has never sacrificed his character to his vanity, and who, to avoid all chance of endangering either good morals, or good taste

“Draws men as they ought to be, not as they are”

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TO A YOUNG FRIEND AT COLLEGE.

*Fredley Farm, July 29, 1806.*

WELL! you have left St. Paul's, and have settled yourself at Cambridge with your heart full of hopes and brave resolutions. You well know that I not only wish, but that I am anxious for your success in life and I have confidence in your capacity. However, my favourable anticipations arise chiefly from your being aware that your station in society must depend entirely on your own exertions. Luckily

you have not to overcome the disadvantage of expecting to inherit, from your father, an income equal to your reasonable desires ; for though it may have the air of a paradox, yet it is truly a serious disadvantage when a young man, going to the bar, is sufficiently provided for.

*"Vitam facit beatiorem*

*Res non parva labore, sed relictis "*

says Martial, but not wisely, and no young man should believe him.

The Lord Chief Justice Kenyon once said to a rich friend asking his opinion as to the probable success of a son, " Sir, let your son forthwith spend " his fortune ; marry, and spend his wife's ; and then " he may be expected to apply with energy to his " profession."

In your case I have no doubts, but such as arise from my having observed that, perhaps, you sometimes may have relied rather too much on the quickness of your talents, and too little on diligent study. Pardon me for owning this, and attribute my frankness to my regard.

It is unfortunate when a man's intellectual and his moral character are not suited to each other. The horses in a carriage should go the same pace and draw in the same direction, or the motion will be neither pleasant nor safe.

Buonaparte has remarked of one of his marshals, "that he had a military genius, but had not intrepidity enough in the field to execute his own plans" and of another he said, "He is as brave as his sword, but he wants judgment and resources; neither," he added, "is to be trusted with a great command."

This want of harmony between the talents and the temperament is often found in private life, and, wherever found, it is the fruitful source of faults and sufferings. Perhaps there are few less happy than those who are ambitious without industry; who pant for the prize, but will not run the race; who thirst for truth, but are too slothful to draw it up from the well.

Now this defect, whether arising from indolence or from timidity, is far from being incurable. It may, at least in part, be remedied by frequently

reflecting on the endless encouragements to exertion held out by our own experience and by example.

“ C'est des difficultés que naissent les miracles ”

It is not every calamity that is a curse, and *early* adversity especially is often a blessing. Perhaps Madame de Maintenon would never have mounted a throne had not her cradle been rocked in a prison. Surmounted obstacles not only teach, but hearten us in our future struggles ; for virtue must be learnt, though unfortunately some of the vices come, as it were, by inspiration. The austerities of our northern climate are thought to be the cause of our abundant comforts ; as our wintry nights and our stormy seas have given us a race of seamen, perhaps unequalled, and certainly not surpassed by any in the world.

“ Mother,” said a Spartan lad going to battle, “ my sword is too short ” “ Add a step to it ” she replied ; but it must be owned that this was advice to be given only to a Spartan boy. They should not be thrown into the water who cannot swim—I know your buoyancy, and I have no fears of your being drowned.

## TO THE SAME.

*Fredley Farm, August 3, 1806.*

YOU should not listen to \* \* \* \*, but prefer, without hesitation, a life of energy to a life of inaction. There are always kind friends enough ready to preach up caution and delay, &c. &c. Yet it is impossible to lay down any general rules of a prudential kind. Every case must be judged of after a careful review of all its circumstances ; for if one, only one, be overlooked, the decision may be injurious or fatal. Thus there ever will be many conflicting reasons for and against a spirit of enterprise and a habit of caution.

Those who advise others to withstand the temptations of hope will always appear to be wiser than they really are ; for how often can it be made certain that the rejected and untried hazard would have been successful ? Besides, those who dissuade us from action have corrupt but powerful allies in

our indolence, irresolution, and cowardice. To despond is very easy, but it requires works as well as faith to engage successfully in a difficult undertaking. The globe is not to be circumnavigated by one wind.

There are, however, few difficulties that hold out against real attacks; they fly, like the visible horizon, before those who advance. A passionate desire and an unwearied will can perform impossibilities, or what seem to be such to the cold and the feeble. If we do but go on, some unseen path will open among the hills. We must not allow ourselves to be discouraged by the apparent disproportion between the result of single efforts and the magnitude of the obstacles to be encountered. Nothing good nor great is to be obtained without courage and industry; but courage and industry must have sunk in despair, and the world must have remained unornamented and unimproved, if men had nicely compared the effect of a single stroke of the chisel with the pyramid to be raised, or of a single impression of the spade with the mountain to be levelled.



All exertion too is in itself delightful, and active amusements seldom tire us. Helvetius owns that he could hardly listen to a concert for two hours, though he could play on an instrument all day long. The chase, we know, has always been the favourite amusement of kings and nobles, for not only fame and fortune, but pleasure is to be earned, and, in all pursuits, efforts, it must not be forgotten, are as indispensable as desires. We should never do nothing. "It is better to wear out than to rust out," says Bishop Cumberland. "There will be time enough for repose in the grave," said Arnauld to Nicole. In truth, the proper rest for man is change of occupation.

As a young man, you should be mindful of the unspeakable importance of early industry, since in youth habits are easily formed, and there is time to recover from defeats. An Italian sonnet justly, as well as elegantly compares procrastination to the folly of a traveller who pursues a brook till it widens into a river and is lost in the sea. The toils as well as risks of an active life are commonly over-

rated, so much may be done by the diligent use of ordinary opportunities ; but they must not always be waited for. We must not only strike the iron while it is hot, but “ strike it till it is made hot ” Herschel the great astronomer declares that ninety or one hundred hours, clear enough for observations, cannot be called an unproductive year.

The lazy, the dissipated, and the fearful, should patiently see the active and the bold pass them in the course. They must bring down their pretensions to the level of their talents. Those who have not energy to work must learn to be humble, and should not vainly hope to unite the incompatible enjoyments of indolence and enterprise, of ambition and self-indulgence. I trust that my young friend will never attempt to reconcile them.

## TO THE SAME.

*London, February 4, 1808.*

I AM glad to hear of your gaining the prize, and, to say the truth, I am better pleased that you owe it to your proficiency in Latin prose than in Latin verse. Not that I think, as many do, that too much time is spent at our great schools in the latter, but it appears to me that too little time is given to the former.

Considering that the Roman language is not only that of the classical writers, but, formerly, was that of law and of philosophy, it is plain that the motives are many and strong for attaining an habitual facility of understanding the tongue wherein such inestimable works have been written. Perhaps, too, the practice of writing is indispensable as the preparation for reading without difficulty.

Yet I desire that you should not misunderstand me. It is neither my intention nor my wish to undervalue poetry, nor even the custom of making verses in a living or a dead language. I do not know

any means of becoming so intimately acquainted with the powers of a language as by composing verses. The restraints of metre, and the necessity of selecting expressions that are not only clear but elegant, compel an author to vary and enrich his phraseology by every allowable idiom. No ! not one even of the abstrusest sciences calls for more severe attention, nor more subtle distinctions ; and, surely, none requires the fancy and the feeling, without which verse is of so little worth that it cannot be reckoned as sterling, but merely as a kind of plated prose. Do not think, therefore, that you are wasting your time in the exercises demanded of you at college, although you are intended for a grave and laborious profession, busied in the noisy highways of real life, and leading far away from the quiet field-paths of literature and philosophy.

To talk to you about the high rank or the principles of poetry is quite needless. No subject has been treated of by abler writers. Yet, as you wish to recall some parts of our last long conver-

sation, I will again mention a passage in MILTON'S "Tractate" where he says that "*Poetry is simple, sensuous, and passionate*"

Perhaps the word "sensuous" is not sufficiently authorised, but, no matter! you will not find elsewhere so brief and so complete an enumeration of the chief qualities in the noblest art \*.

\* *Note*, 1834. In Gray's Common-place-book is the following striking passage:—"In former times, they loved, I will not say tediousness, but length, and a train of circumstances in a narration. The vulgar do so still: it gives an air of reality to the facts, it fixes the attention, raises and keeps in suspense their expectation, and supplies the place of their little and lifeless imagination; and it keeps pace with the slow motion of their own thoughts. Tell them a story as you would to a man of wit; it will appear to them as an object seen in the night by a flash of lightning: but when you have placed it in various lights, and various positions, they will come at last to see and feel it as well as others. But we need not confine ourselves to the vulgar, and to understandings beneath our own. *Circumstance* ever was and ever will be the essence both of poetry and oratory. It has in some sort the same effect upon every mind that it has upon that of the populace; and I fear the quickness and delicate impatience of these polished times are but the forerunners of the decline of all those beautiful arts which depend upon the imagination \* \* \* \* \* Homer, the father of *Circumstance*, has occasion for the same apology."

There are also in Priestley's Lectures on Oratory some excellent remarks, beginning thus: "In order  
 "thoroughly to interest a reader, it is of singular  
 "advantage to be very circumstantial, and to introduce as many *sensible* images as possible"

Your own memory cannot fail to suggest many proofs of this maxim; but I must warn you not to fall into the common error of supposing that sensible images mean allusions to the object of *sight* only.—Voltaire goes so far as to say, "Toute métaphore doit être une image qu'on puisse peindre. "C'est une règle qui ne souffre point d'exception;" and Pope seems to have been misled too often in the choice of epithets by this mistake. One instance you may remember my noticing, where he thus renders a line in the first book of the Iliad—

"Then in the sheath returned the *shining* blade"

which Dryden had translated far more spiritedly and more characteristically of the impetuous hero,

"And in the sheath reluctant plunged the blade"

Do you not hear the hilt ring against the cover?

Let me mention, as an instance of a touching allusion to another sense, the couplet of a celebrated living poet describing some children at play among the tombs

“ Alas ! unconscious of the kindred earth,  
That *faintly echoed* to the voice of mirth ”

Take too a whole stanza from the “ Annus Mirabilis,” chiefly for the sake of one little word.

“ As those who unripe veins in mines explore,  
“ On the rich bed again the *warm* turf lay,  
“ (Till Time digests the yet imperfect ore,)  
“ Knowing it will be gold another day ”

The word “passionate” needs no explanation ; but you must not forget poetry should be “ simple ” and though it must be allowed to magnify its objects and to brighten their colours, it ought not to change their forms and proportions. It may exaggerate, but must not distort.

This warning is much needed ; for, of the three qualities, simplicity is most frequently forgotten by the writer, though not by the reader. It is easier, you know, to make a Venus fine than beautiful.

Ambitious but feeble writers in prose and in verse are often hyperbolic, and for the sake of being thought "imaginative" pour forth redundant and inconsistent metaphors; though such extravagance is scarcely less opposed than weakness is to sublimity; as exaggeration is a more mischievous enemy to truth than contradiction.

" Mais l'audace est commune, et le bon sens est rare,  
 " Au lieu d'être piquant, souvent on est bizarre "

Mixed metaphors are a sure proof of a feeble imagination, since a *distinct* and *vivid* conception of one image cannot be confused with another;—a simile beginning with a fire could not end in a flood.

There is another kind of offence against simplicity which should be shunned; though it occurs often in Johnson, and though the abstract terms, affected by him, give a kind of false pomp to the style, assuming the air of personification. He thus commences his imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal :—

" Let observation, with extensive view,  
 " Survey mankind from China to Peru "



Dryden and Pope would have been satisfied with the second line, and would have avoided both the tautology and pomposity of the first.

Cowper has committed the same fault when he exclaims—

“ Oh ! for a lodge in some vast wilderness !

“ Some boundless *contiguity* of shade !”

He should have stopped at the end of the first line ; or, if he wished to dwell on the intensity of the retirement, he should have rejected the swollen word “ contiguity.” Even “ some boundless and impenetrable shade ” would have been better.

All affectation and appearance of effort are as disagreeable in poetry as insipidity, though that is certainly the sin (never to be forgiven) against its Spirit. Its character, its very essence, being to give pleasure, all its subordinate qualities must be estimated in subservience to this necessity. Thus it is requisite that the diction should not only be perspicuous, and select, and animated, but also melodious, and, when we talk of poetical prose, we mean that some of the

other excellencies of poetry are there; but it is implied that one great beauty is absent, the music of the metre.

“*Et vera incessu patuit Dea*”

Luckily for me, though verse is obliged to be entertaining, a letter is not; for it may be both long and dull, if sent in the hope of doing service, and when the writer can truly subscribe himself, as I do now,

“Affectionately yours.”

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TO THE SAME.

22nd May, 1809.

“*Io ti vedo*”—You are found out. It is easy to see, through all your letters, that the hot verse-fit of the intermittent is strong upon you; else you would not be so importunate for my counsel. Under the pretext of seeking advice, you indulge your love by talking about its object.

Your self-distrust is a good symptom. Very few can be eminent in the most delightful and difficult of all arts, and none, who are well satisfied with themselves, can be expected to satisfy others.

I should not be your friend if I did not dissuade you from making the inevitable sacrifice of all other pursuits to the "idle trade."

"Where once such fairies dance no grass doth grow"

Yet I have encouraged your trying to bend the bow of Ulysses, for better reasons than because I hoped you to perform a miracle impossible to any but the inspired.

Patient study is requisite ; but, the more I think, the more am I convinced that in poetry an irresistible and peculiar genius is indispensable. In this art an industry that never sleeps can do much ; but gifts, natural gifts, can do much more. A little difference in native genius, when augmented by practice, is like a small superiority in the first number of a geometrical series.

I will not say the same of any other intellectual

effort ; but in writing verse the first thoughts should always be respected, perhaps preferred.

You beg for more instances to explain a remark in my last letter. They are to be found in every page of your Homer. Perhaps circumstantiality is the chief distinction between Greek and Latin poetry ; between first and second-rate excellence. Dante and Shakespeare also abound in particulars drawn from every sense.

I am inclined to think as you do of Dryden and Pope. The former seldom seems to do his very best ; the latter always. Of course the reader ranks Dryden, but not Pope, above his works. Yet, to be honest, let me ask who does not read the latter's verses most frequently, and remember them better too ? Indeed we have them by heart.

As to the imitative words that you speak of, you need not trouble yourself about them. " Suiting the sound to the sense " has another and a better meaning, but it will seldom be graceful unless unsought. Milton is very happy, or very skilful,

in this flow of metre harmonising with the sentiment and the description. Thus Satan

“ Throws his steep flight in mănŷ än āērŷ whirl ”

“ Lights on his feet, as when a prowling wolf

“ Leaps o’er thē fence with ease intō the fold ”

“ Sin towards the gate rolling her bestial train ”

“ Celestial voices to the midnight air

“ Sole, or responsive to each other’s notes ”

For these, and indeed for all the beauties of poetry, believe me, that it is safer to trust to one’s unconscious and unaffected habits of thinking and feeling, than to the best rules gathered even from the greatest examples. Such habits are the last result of all our mental associations. No maxims can be subtle nor comprehensive enough to guide invention.

In spite of the critics, the general favourites have ever been those who excel rather in spirit and variety, than in elaborate execution; though, \*in the rare instances where both unite, the poet is worshipped and the work immortal.

Gray, it must be owned, is a consummate workman in every respect, but in failing to preserve that bewitching air of freedom and facility for whose absence there is no full compensation.

There is something similar to this in our handwriting. A painted letter, as it is called, can never be taken for one flowing from the first stroke of the pen. This opinion, notwithstanding, should not hinder previous study and much practice; since it relates only to the moment of actual composition.

"You charge me fifty sequins" said a Venetian nobleman to a sculptor, "for a bust that cost you only ten days' labour"—"You forget" replied the artist, "that I have been thirty years learning to make that bust in ten days"

Of merely verbal figures little needs be said, though the ablest writers (Cicero especially) use them freely.

You were struck, I remember, by old Lydgate's daring repetition of one word, in speaking of a child—

"Fair is not fair enough for one so fair"

Such forms of speech are displeasing when they are evidently contrived, though they add both force and elegance when they present themselves to the mind. It sometimes happens that a perfect symmetry, a formality in the phrase, a daring metaphor, an hyperbole, are the most natural and proper expression of the thought or sentiment. "Quanto più sodezza tanto più splendore" These beauties should be neither sought nor shunned.

Indeed too much anxiety about expression defeats itself. It may as well be expected that a dancer always thinking of the five positions should move with ease and grace, as that an author should write agreeably, who is fettered by habitual self-criticism. It is no paradox to say that the perfection of style is to have none, but to let the words be suggested by the sentiments, unchecked by the monotony of a manner, and untainted by affectation; and, when it happens that the diction is happy,

"'Tis a sweetness of breath from a soundness of sense."

## TO THE SAME.

*16th January, 1810.*

CERTAINLY we do not usually go to church expecting to hear a lecture on the subject of mere good-manners; but the observations of the right reverend preacher, which you quote, are uncommonly striking, and far from being out of place in the pulpit.

The system of Lord Chesterfield, as inculcated in his famous letters, is deserving of public censure, and, fortunately, it is so ill-suited to the morals and to the taste of Englishmen, that it has been generally discredited by the well-bred, and by the right-hearted, in this country.

Lord Chatham, who was almost as remarkable for his manners, as for his eloquence and his public-spirit, has defined good breeding "Benevolence in trifles, or the preference of others to ourselves in the little daily occurrences of life," and this you



cannot but perceive is very different from the complimentary duplicity recommended by his brother earl; for whom there is but one excuse, that a cold and repulsive demeanour has been so prevalent in this country, as to induce Mr. Loveday to call shyness the English-mania.

In the spirit of Lord Chatham it is of unspeakable importance to follow his precepts and his example, and, perhaps, Lady Mary Wortley Montague hardly speaks too strongly when she says "civility costs nothing and buys everything. Engrave this on your heart" An amusing and hardly credible instance of its effect is related of Ghino di Tacco (mentioned both by Dante and Boccaccio,) a highway-man, who was knighted by the pope for robbing genteelly.

Of this civility the trouble and the self-sacrifice are but small, and Chesterfield's scheme requires still less. A little silver will plate a large surface of copper, and common brass, when highly polished, looks like gold.

To be captious and contradictory is offensive

enough, but not so provoking, so unbearable, as the spirit of mockery affected by witlings and coxcombs ; for that, like a blighting east-wind, withers every living and heartfelt sentiment springing up in conversation, and, especially, chills and disheartens the young, in their earliest intercourse with the world. The weapon inflicting the wound, is so fine as to be scarcely perceptible, but the point has been dipped in poison. A breeze, itself invisible, often makes a whole lake to shudder. Yet one would rather be cut by a keen than by a blunt lancet, and a coarse supercilious way is almost as hateful as the freezing irony of more subtle ill-humour. The Italians have, however, always complained more of their French, than of their Austrian masters, because, though ill-treated, they are not despised by the latter. In one respect the underbred have an advantage, and they often excel in banter, being without any delicacy to restrain their malice, or their heedlessness.

There is no occasion either to jeer or to scold

habitually, yet we need not always stifle our displeasure at what is improper or insolent; but then there is no necessity for losing our temper because we cannot make others better than we can make ourselves. There are also sometimes faults so inveterate that it would be cruel to notice them, as when a man has a mortal disorder none but his physician should speak to him on the painful subject. At Constantinople a Turk is punished, once or twice, for being drunk, but afterwards he is considered as irreclaimable, and he is called a privileged imperial drunkard. It is neither good-natured nor wise to be always attacking faults. "I suppose" says an obscure novel, "that Daniel when cast into the lions' den, did not amuse himself by twisting their tails, or treading on their toes"

Those who are accustomed to the best company avoid all these offences; but there is one kind of ill-breeding nearly universal; I mean that of not listening to others, or of listening only to devise objections and contradictions. This fault, though

common, is unpardonable, unless when people insist upon our mounting their hobby, without asking us whether we wish to take a ride or not.

Opposite to this is a disagreeable and dishonest practice of instantaneously assenting to every opinion; and of sympathising extravagantly with every emotion that is uttered. Such persons should either acquire the power, attributed to a famous strolling player, of laughing on one side of his face, and weeping on the other; or they should put on that sort of mask, which, it has been supposed, the ancient actors wore, painted on one side so as to express joy, and on the other side grief.

It may seem difficult to steer always between bluntness and plain-dealing; between giving merited praise and lavishing indiscriminate flattery; but it is very easy; good-humour, kind-heartedness, and perfect simplicity, being all that are requisite to doing what is right in the right way. It is well worth every man's while to do his best that he may please, be his rank, or his wealth ever so great. If he makes himself disagreeable it is easy to give him

a bad name, and then every body may save themselves the trouble of doing him common justice.

You remember the fairy who was so good-natured that any weapon, aimed at her, changed its quality; stones became balls of silk and arrows were turned into flowers. The moral of the fable is evident. Be but liked and you will not be censured for your failings (should you have any,) nor envied for your good fortune.—The last, it must be owned, is the least common reward of good manners, yet I hope that it is one which you will frequently receive.

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TO A LAW STUDENT.

*20th June, 1817.*

So you have been several times in the gallery of the House of Commons and were both delighted and disappointed. This is just what I expected. Judging of the speakers by a preconception of the possibilities of the art, they are found wanting; but comparing

them with each other, the differences in merit are extreme.

With your expectations raised by reading Demosthenes and Cicero, and by the warmth of party-praise, what wonder that, at first, even the very best were not equal to your anticipations?

You need not to be told that the general principles of any art must be modified so as to suit the maxims and habits of the assembly, where they are to be put in practice.

The House of Commons is so different a body in its construction and in its purposes from any, either ancient or modern, that its idioms, both of thought and of language, must be caught before a man can talk in such a manner as to be liked, or even understood.

It is a place of serious business and all ostentation, *if perceptible*, is ridiculous. Perhaps one or two individuals may be tolerated and allowed to amuse, merely by ornament, or by wit and humour; but an attempt to succeed in this way is ruinous to a new member. It is unfortunately necessary to have something to say, and facts, or striking arguments the

House will always listen to, though delivered in any terms, however homely, or with any accent, however provincial. Speeches also for constituents are heard with indulgence, if not too frequent, nor too long ; but debate, real debate, is the characteristical eloquence of the House ; and be assured that the India-house, a vestry, a committee, and other meetings of business, are far better preparatory schools for parliament than debating societies are. In these latter self-possession and fluency may be learnt ; but vicious habits of declamation, and of hunting for applause, are too often formed. I remember being told, that in the first meetings of the society at a public school, two or three evenings were consumed in debating whether the floor should be covered with a sail-cloth or a carpet ; and I have no doubt that better practice was gained in these important discussions, than in those that soon followed on liberty, slavery, passive obedience, and tyrannicide. It has been truly said, that nothing is so unlike a battle as a review.

As an illustration of this spirit of serious business, I must mention a quality, which, presupposing great

talents and great knowledge, must always be uncommon ; but which makes an irresistible impression on a public assembly of educated men. I mean the merit of stating the question in debate *fairly*, and I mean it as an oratorical and not merely as a moral superiority. Any audience, but especially an educated and impatient audience, listens with a totally different kind and degree of attention to a speaker of this character and to one, who, tempted by the dangerous facility of a feebler practice, either alters, or weakens, or exaggerates the language and sentiments of his adversary.

Mr. Fox was an illustrious example of this honestest, best, and bravest manner : nay, sometimes he stated the arguments of his opponents so advantageously, that his friends have been alarmed lest he should fail to answer them. His great rival formerly, and another accomplished orator now living, have seldom ventured on this hazardous candour. In truth, the last mentioned possesses too many talents ; for, betrayed by his singular powers of declamation and of sarcasm, he often produces more



admiration than conviction, and rarely delivers an important speech without making an enemy for life. Had he been a less man he would be a greater speaker, and a better leader in a popular assembly.

This good faith in controversy not only manifests, but nourishes also another great oratorical excellence,—a hearty love of the subject and a deep sense of the public welfare, prevailing over that self-regard and desire of victory, inseparable, in some degree, from the infirmity of human nature. They who have no real feeling, always pitch their expressions too high, or too low ; as deaf people do their voices.

It is not without some misgiving that I perceive with how much more interest you talk of parliament than of chancery. It is very usual and very natural to prefer the former. Let me entreat you to consider well. I have heard one of the ablest and most efficient men in this country (actually at the time the chosen leader of the Opposition, enjoying the fame of such a station, and looking forwards, doubtless, to high office) own, more than once, with much emotion, that he had made a fatal mistake in preferring par-

liament to the Bar. At the bar he well knew that he must have risen to opulence and to rank, and he bitterly regretted having forsaken his lawful wife, the profession, for that fascinating but impoverishing harlot, Politics.

If you should abandon your Penelope and your home for Calypso, remember that I told you of the advice given, in my hearing, at different times to a young lawyer, by Mr. Windham, and by Mr. Horne Tooke—not to look for a seat till he had pretensions to be made Solicitor-general.

Yours is so laborious a calling and your competitors are so many and so keen, that not only ambition but amusement tempts many to quit the Inns of Court, and I have known several very able young men drawn aside by making a single continental tour, during the long vacation. A passion for travelling has overcome both prudence and the love of distinction.

You will now understand why I was glad to hear that you are going with your sisters, no farther than to Brighton. There Coke and Blackstone will help

you profitably (and why not pleasantly?) through the hot hours in the middle of the day, and, if you should take the siesta, you will dream of being Lord Chancellor, or Lord Chief Justice.

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TO THE SAME.

*2nd December, 1817.*

IF your low spirits arise from bodily illness (as is often the case) you must consult Dr. Baillie. I can do nothing for you. Perhaps you should fast a little and walk and ride. But if they are caused by disappointment, by impatience, or by calamity, you can do much for yourself. The well-known, worn-out topics of consolation and of encouragement are become trite, because they are reasonable, and you will soon be cured, if you steadily persevere in a course of moral alteratives.

You have no right to be dispirited, possessing as you do all that one of the greatest, as well as oldest

sages has declared to be the only requisites for happiness—a sound mind, a sound body, and a competence.

An anxious, restless temper, that runs to meet care on its way, that regrets lost opportunities too much, and that is over-pains-taking in contrivances for happiness, is foolish and should not be indulged.

“ On doit être heureux sans trop penser à l'être ”

If you cannot be happy in one way, be happy in another, and this facility of disposition wants but little aid from philosophy, for health and good-humour are almost the whole affair. Many run about after felicity, like an absent man hunting for his hat, while it is on his head, or in his hand.

Though sometimes small evils, like invisible insects, inflict great pain, and a single hair may stop a vast machine, yet the chief secret of comfort lies in not suffering trifles to vex one, and in prudently cultivating an under-growth of small pleasures, since very few great ones, alas ! are let on long leases.

I cannot help seeing that you are dissatisfied with your occupation, and that you think yourself unlucky in having been destined to take it up, before you

were old enough to chuse for yourself. Do not be too sure that you would have chosen well. I somewhere met with an observation, which, being true, is important, that in a masquerade, where people assume what characters they like, "how ill they often play them!" Many parts are probably preferred for the sake of the dress, and do not many young men enter into the navy or army, that they may wear a sword and a handsome uniform, and be acceptable partners at a ball? Vanity is hard-hearted and insists upon wealth, rank, and admiration. Even so great a man as Prince Eugene owned (after gaining a useless victory), that "*on travaille trop pour la Gazette.*" Such objects of pursuit are losing their value every day, and you must have observed that rank gives now but little precedence, except in a procession.

But I am really ashamed even to hint at such endless and obvious commonplaces, and I shall only repeat the remark, which seems to have struck you, that in all the professions, high stations seem to come down to us, rather than that we have got up to them.

But you, forsooth, are too sensible to be ambitious, and you are, perhaps, only disheartened by some unforeseen obstacles to reasonable desires. Be it so! but this will not justify, nor even excuse, dejection. Untoward accidents will sometimes happen; but, after many many years of thoughtful experience, I can truly say, that nearly all those, who began life with me, have succeeded, or failed as they deserved. “*Faber quisque fortunæ propriæ*”

Ill fortune at your age is often good for us, both in teaching and in bracing the mind and, even in our later days, it may often be turned to advantage, or overcome. Besides, trifling precautions will often prevent great mischiefs; as a slight turn of the wrist parries a mortal thrust.

Forgive me for talking in this lecturing manner. Am I doing you wrong? Am I, unawares, increasing the uneasiness that I am most anxious to dispel? I am not without some fear that I am galling the wound which I wish to heal. Once more, forgive me, and be assured that I am, &c. &c.

## TO THE SAME.

*January 7, 1818.*

I CERTAINLY did not wish that you should starve yourself, or run about, like a penny postman, either on foot, or on horseback ; for moderation is not only the law of enjoyment, but of wholesome labour too.

You have begun to adopt new habits with the zeal of a repentant convert, and, as you have great speed, it is of consequence that you should travel in the right road.

I rejoice to hear that you have already subdued and cast out the blue devils that beset you. Some men are possessed by another and a more dangerous kind, which enter the voluptuous, the vain, the idle and the unprincipled ; but they must be exorcised by stronger forms of incantation, and you are not likely to be assaulted by such evil spirits. A German says, that " Luther knew what he was about " when he threw his ink-stand at Satan's head, for " there is nothing the Devil hates like ink "

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You are luckily not framed for idleness and you are therefore in no danger of being led aside from the shortest, the safest and the pleasantest path to happiness, which, you may be sure, is soonest found by those that live a life of action and of duty. This is almost preaching, I know, "*mais c'est jour de sermon,*" for you have teased me into mounting the pulpit. Sit down, therefore, and hear me patiently. The discourse shall be very short, and you must not attribute my advice to self-sufficiency, for it is often founded on my own mistakes.

It would be needless to repeat what I wrote, long since, to a friend of yours and mine, since you have read those letters recommending industry and perseverance ; yet I ought to confess that though you may look to your understanding for amusement, it is to the affections that we must trust for happiness. These imply a spirit of self-sacrifice ; and, often, our virtues, like our children, are endeared to us by what we suffer for them. Remember too that conscience, even when it fails to govern our conduct, can dis-



turb our peace of mind. Yes! it is neither paradoxical, nor merely poetical, to say

“ That seeking others' good, we find our own ”

This solid, yet romantic maxim, is found in no less a writer than Plato; who, sometimes, in his moral lessons, as well as in his theological, is almost, though not altogether, a Christian.

But this truth does not stand in need of support from authority. The days and nights of every tender mother abound with instances of this encouraging fact. She will not only endure any toil, but brave any danger, for the sake of her helpless child.

“ Oh! femmes c'est à tort qu'on vous nomme timides,

“ A la voix de vos cœurs vous êtes intrepides ”

No! human nature is not so wholly selfish as it is represented by Rochefoucault and by Swift.

Satirical writers and talkers are not half so clever as they think themselves, nor as they are thought to be. They do winnow the corn 'tis true, but 'tis to feed upon the chaff.

I am sorry to add that they who are always speaking ill of others, are also very apt to be doing ill to them.

It requires some talent and some generosity to find out talent and generosity in others, though nothing but self-conceit and malice are needed to discover, or to imagine faults, and it is much easier for an ill-natured than for a good-natured man to be smart and witty.

“ S’il n’eut mal parlé de personne,  
 “ On n’eut jamais parlé de lui ”

The most gifted men, that I have known, have been the least addicted to depreciate either friends or foes. Dr. Johnson, Mr. Burke, and Mr. Fox, were always more inclined to overrate them. Your shrewd, sly, evil-speaking fellow is generally a shallow personage, and frequently he is as venomous and as false when he flatters as when he reviles. He seldom praises John but to vex Thomas.

Do not, pray do not! “ sit in the seat of the “ scorner ” whose nature it is to sneer at every thing

but impudent vice and successful crime. By these he is generally awed and silenced.

Are these poor heartless creatures to be envied? Can you think that the Duc de Richelieu was a happier man than Fenelon? or Dean Swift than Bishop Berkeley? You know better. You are not accustomed to turn the tapestry that you may look at the wrong side.

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TO THE SAME.

*13th January, 1818.*

I NATURALLY supposed that William had shown the letters to you, as well as to your brother, and I am sorry that I mentioned them, since you have had the trouble to write for copies, which it must be a drowsy labour for him to make.

What I remember is that I vehemently urged him to be both studious and active, and to disregard the advice and example of his clever but inconsiderate

young companion. Till you told me, I had not heard of the latter's having been himself touched by my remonstrances, and that he even talked of sending to me, as my due, some of the prize-books which he had gained. This would be a whimsical but substantial reward and, of course, it would encourage me to go lecturing on till my shelves were filled. Do tell me? What am I to expect as my portion of your honours when you are made Solicitor-general, or a Judge? Of the silk gown that you will soon wear, you can surely spare me enough for a cravat.

You see that I anticipate your success, because I rely on your taking the necessary steps, always remembering that when you have ten miles to go, nine are but half the way. Persist, persist and you will be recompensed not merely with an ovation, but with a triumph. Nothing can withstand a steady determination. It is told of a young French ensign that he used to walk about his apartment, exclaiming " Je veux être Maréchale de France et grand " Général " and he not only did gain the bâton, but became a distinguished commander. The rewards of

courage and perseverance are always certain, and, sometimes immediate : an opinion which you will allow me to illustrate, by citing that example from your favourite LIVY, which you have alluded to for another purpose. Annibal's genius and energy were certainly tasked to the uttermost, when lifting his army over the Alps, but once at the top, Behold Italy lay at his feet !

I am glad that you are so much in love with this Latin historian, for he is of an enthusiastic and even poetical character, delighting to celebrate heroic actions, and, therefore, well fitted to record the achievements of a brave and mighty nation. His pages will afford you, at present, a far more wholesome diet than those of the satirists whom you are also reading. The latter, however, will be well worth your studying hereafter ; but not till the habit of loving and admiring the good and the great in human nature has become inveterate. In this respect the course of reading at your age is very important, for a traveller's garments cannot but retain the odour of the flowers and shrubs, through which he has

passed. Yes! Juvenal and Persius must be deferred. At any time of life, but particularly in youth, the disposition to ridicule and to traduce, is most unfortunate, being the infallible sign of a second-rate understanding, and an unhappy temper.

I wish to avoid exaggeration, yet I must say that this habit has a tendency to turn the earth into a place of torment for our wounded vanity and mortified selfishness, and to render purgatory and Tartarus unnecessary.

What I am speaking of, though akin to it, is not, precisely, the "air moqueur" of Voltaire and his innumerable imitators, though that turn of mind is prone to degenerate into malice and disease.

The root of this sourness lies generally in self-conceit, yet there was, lately, a powerful and popular writer, vain even to madness, but raised by his talents far above the paltry practice of depreciating others, who complains, "*Qu'on censure d'un ton de maître, mais pour instruire il en faut prendre un autre, auquel la hauteur se complait moins*" Mediocrity has not only a pleasure, but a pride, in sneering at

refinement, generosity and elevation of sentiment, and, as there is a kind of mean self-interest in lowering the character of other men, it cannot be denied that these children of the world are, in a vulgar sense, "wise in their generation"

You are as little likely as any young man that I know to think best of yourself when you think worst of others, and you look with scorn on those whose envy is a provider for their vanity, and who resent, as an injury, all praise bestowed on merit not their own.

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TO THE SAME.

*January 22, 1818.*

You are audience enough for me. I would rather be of some service to you than harangue successfully at a public meeting, as multitudinous as that which we attended the other day at Freemasons' Hall.

You travel very fast in imagination; you have a

long sight, and see the road a long way before you. That exquisite dialogue, "De Senectute" seems to have made you wish to be, at once, as old as Cato, that you may enjoy his pleasures, and exhibit his skill in the best of all arts, the art of living.

Do not wait, however; but, as you run along, snatch at every fruit and every flower growing within your reach: for, after all that can be said, youth, the age of hope and admiration, and manhood, the age of business and of influence, are to be preferred to the period of extinguished passions and languid curiosity. At that season our hopes and wishes must have been too long dropping, leaf by leaf, away. The last scenes of the fifth act are seldom the most interesting either in a tragedy or a comedy. Yet many compensations arise as our sensibility decays.

"Time steals away the rose 'tis true,

"But then the thorn is blunted too"

Though I like much better than these humiliating thoughts the spirit of Montaigne's sturdy deter-



mination, "Les ans peuvent m'entraîner, mais à  
"réculons"

On this subject I have lately read a letter written  
by a distinguished clergyman, from which I send  
you an extract.

"Certainly, if a man loses his leg, he need not  
"fear corns. As to the abstract question of boyish  
"or manly happiness, I own I think differently of it  
"according to the temper I am in, or (after the  
"French philosophers) according to the state of my  
"digestion.

"I have no recollection in my boyish days of  
"quiet happiness, but of many fears, perturbations,  
" &c., and a continual longing for the dignity and  
"the independence of the manly state. Now that I  
"am a man and verging towards an old one, I find  
"my vessel suffers but little from the short gusts  
"and ripples of the passions; but is borne along  
"under a tattered sail by the steady trade-wind  
"of solicitude. When I was a boy, my pleasures  
"and cares were selfish; now I care and think more  
"for others than for myself. Here I exult in some

“ little advantage from the comparison ; and yet,  
 “ after all, the *prospect* is the chief subject of  
 “ comparison. That of a boy is full of change and  
 “ novelty. That of an elderly man admits of little  
 “ variety and no novelty, but the great one of all—  
 “ a new existence ! The conclusion of this long  
 “ sermon is, that a thoughtful boy may be happy  
 “ without religion, but a thoughtful man cannot ”

I can add nothing to this worth your reading, so  
 farewell ! and may you live long enough to feel  
 that the writer has not over-rated the delights of  
 an old man in looking forward to a better world !

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TO THE SAME.

*November 8, 1819.*

You are desirous, I see, that I should not fancy  
 my letters are tiresome, and I, therefore, once more  
 assure you that our correspondence cannot be irksome  
 to me, so long as I can hope that it may be serviceable  
 to you.

Of one thing pray be certain, that every person should retain the indisputable right of following or disregarding advice ; inasmuch as a man himself must be far better acquainted than another can be, with his own inmost wishes and real capabilities.

It is at once an odious and a ridiculous kind of tyranny to take it ill of a friend that he judges for himself in the last resort. " Ah ! if he had but " followed my advice " " I told him what must " happen " and all such betrayings of wounded vanity, are proofs that good sense and good will have both been wanting.

Indeed, if a selfish and conceited man's object is to gain a character for sagacity, he should be glad when his counsel has been disregarded. Human life is so liable to unforeseen troubles that, whatsoever course may be pursued, we shall often regret the lot that we have chosen. As a bachelor I can be no judge of a known saying, " If you marry, or if you do not marry, " you will repent " But this will serve as a specimen of the general language. Herein, however, we must avoid the opposite and prevailing evil practice

of asking advice for the sake only of stealing a sanction, or a help to our own predeterminations. I was sincerely pleased by the frankness of a young lady, who, being urged to consult me respecting an offer of marriage, replied, "Why should I wait? My mind is made up, and I will not use an old friend so ill as to trouble him for advice which I shall not be guided by"

It would not be easy to mention any habit more pernicious than that of listening or reading with a secret resolve to reject, or to evade every opinion that does not suit our own inclinations. Immediate obedience should follow the decisions of the understanding, and the stimulus of benevolent emotions. One of the most serious objections to pathetic works of fiction is, that they tend to create a habit of feeling pity or indignation, without actually relieving distress, or resisting oppression.

Oh! it is very easy to cherish, like Sterne, the sensibilities that lead to no sacrifices and to no inconvenience. Most of those that are so vain of their fine feelings are persons loving themselves

very dearly, and having, perhaps, a violent regard for their fellow creatures in general, though caring little or nothing for the individuals about them. Of sighs and tears they are profuse, but niggardly of their money and their time. Montaigne speaks of a man as extraordinary "*Qui ait des opinions supercelestes, sans avoir des mœurs souterreines.*" In Butler's profound discourses, and in a sermon of Priestley "on the duty of not living to ourselves" these counterfeits of sterling benevolence are well detected and exposed.

Nearly akin to this habit of taking advice without following it, and of sympathising without serving, is the practice of the irresolute in deliberating without deciding. "What I cannot resolve upon in half an hour" said the Duc de Guise, "I cannot resolve upon at all." In the memoirs of the Cardinal du Retz, you will find many amusing and instructive instances of the conspirators shrinking from the painful necessity of decision.

It is unwholesome as well as unpleasant to stand shivering on the brink of a cold-bath. I am glad that

you have plunged. Don't you feel a glow of self-satisfaction when you put on your gown and wig? Sweet is the sleep that follows a final resolve. Now that you have actually been *called*, I need not say, "Good night."

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TO THE SAME.

11 Jan. 1820.

I AM a most reluctant convert, but I *am* convinced. Your father having, at length, consented, and your medical friends having deliberately advised you to retire from the practice of the Profession, I can no longer withhold my unnecessary consent. Why should you ask it?

There is no resisting the plea of habitual bad health; which often unfits its victims for exertion more, much more than is imagined by the poor invalid's most affectionate friends. I have seen several affecting instances of unconscious cruelty

through the want of a sufficiently early sympathy with the sufferings of those best loved, whose painful or languid feelings have sometimes much preceded the outward evidences of illness ; as a bough may be green long after the root has been wounded. Would to heaven that I could entirely acquit myself of this sincerely repented fault !

Now then ! you are about fully to enjoy the leisure so long sighed for, and you seem to look forward not only to relief from indisposition, but to uninterrupted gratifications. I heartily wish that your expectations may be surpassed by the reality, and I would not hint at the possibility of disappointment, were I not certain that your chance for future content will be increased by the moderation of your present hopes. You must not look for a series of pungent pleasures, or extatic excitements, but for many insipid, and for some vexatious hours. When Don Quixote asked his squire whether he should mark a particular day with a white or a black stone, Sancho replied " Faith sir ! if you will be ruled by " me, with neither, but with good brown ochre."

You will often have to use the ochre, and you will be lucky if you are not obliged to take the darkest chalk sometimes.

Much will depend on your immediately applying to science or literature the talents and the time that you are not strong enough to employ in a gainful and honourable, but a hard-working and anxious calling. If the faculties are not exercised they become the sources of uneasy and unwholesome feelings; nay! as Madame Geoffrin thought, "On meurt, quelquefois, de bêtise" A man above want must employ either his talents, or his virtues, or both. You should, at once, revive your Cambridge studies, consulting of course your own taste in the choice, for we should humour ourselves in our intellectual pursuits. Hitherto you have preferred, as I have ever done, the natural history of man, which comprehends not only the body but the mind, not only his senses, appetites, strength and infirmities, but his imagination, understanding, manners and morals. Surely, therefore, most of the literary departments may as truly be thought philosophy as



the history of birds, beasts and insects, or as mathematics, astronomy and chymistry. Here is business for an idle gentleman like you !

You have had too good an education to fall into the ridiculous mistake of old Mrs. \* \* \* who, being asked, " Do you play on your piano-forte " answered " No ! " " Do you draw or paint " " No ! " " Do you work with the needle " " No ! " " Do you walk or ride " " No ! " " Then you read perhaps " " No ! " " I do none of these things ; I like to keep all my leisure at liberty " It must have been some such excellent persons that Mons. de Piis praises in the following couplet,

" On s'éveille, on se lève, on s'habille et l'on sort "

" On rentre, on dine, on soupe, on se couche, et on dort "

Because you are going on the Continent you need not defer your philosophical enquiries, nor need you neglect your books, because there you are chiefly to open your eyes and your ears. What can be learnt by travel must be in proportion to previous acquirements, as the quantity poured into any vessel must be limited by its capacity. " Sir " said Dr.

Johnson to a fine gentleman just returned from Italy, "some men will learn more in the Hampstead "stage than others in the tour of Europe"

Since you must return in three or four months, I recommend the following course, which is sketched with a view rather to your seeing the best than every thing. Many waste their money, their days and their strength in striving to see all that is to be seen, as fruitlessly as those that gallop across the plains of South America after a horse or two, hard to catch and worth nothing when caught.

Ostend. Bruges. Ghent. Brussels. Namur. Liege. Aix la Chapelle. Cologne. Coblenz. Mentz. Frankfurt. Heidelberg! Baden Bade. Schaffhausen, seeing the Fall of Rhine as you go to Zurich. Rapperschwyl. Wesen. Wallenstadt. Ragatz and Pfeffers. Coire. Reichenau (the meeting of the two Rhines). Toasis. Via Mala! getting out of your carriage to walk from the first to the second bridge. Splughen. Chiavenna. Bellagio! where stay as long as you can, to walk in the Serbelloni grounds, and to the Melzi palace. Como. Milan. Saronno, stopping to look at the

little church, built by Bramante and painted by Luini. Varese. Laveno. Isola Madre! Isola Bella. Baveno—If you have time go to the little lake of Orta. Duomo D'Ossola. Simplon! at Visp look up at Monte Rosa from the bridge. Martigny. B  x. Chillon. Vevay (here walk under the chestnuts in the cathedral yard). Lausanne—Gibbon's house and terrace. Berne. Thun—walk to the Chateau de Schadau grounds. Interlachen. Ghiesbach. Colline de Gibet! Unspounnen. Lauterbrunnen! Grindelwald. Meyringhen. Lungern. Alpnach. Weggis! Rhigi! Lucerne, here walk on the Allewinden. Geneva. Salenche. Servoz. Chamouny! Montanvert. Cross by the Col de Bon Homme &c. to Courmayeur and St. Didier!! Aosta. Ascend to the Hospice on St. Bernard and return. Turin. Mont Cenis. Lyons. Paris.

TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

*Fredley, 10th September, 1812.*

I DO not wonder that you should be embarrassed and delayed by the extreme difficulty of giving a narrative form to the materials collected and to the reflections that must have occurred to a man of your philosophical turn.

As we walked up Kirkston some weeks ago, you will perhaps recollect that I quoted imperfectly (what I shall now copy) a passage from Hobbes's remarkable preface to his translation of Thucydides.

“ The principal and proper work of history being  
“ to instruct, and enable men by the knowledge of  
“ actions past to bear themselves prudently in the  
“ present, and providently towards the future, there  
“ is not extant any other (merely human) that doth  
“ more fully and naturally perform it than this of  
“ my author. It is true, that there be many excellent  
“ and profitable histories written since ; and in some

“ of them there be inserted very wise discourses both  
 “ of manners and policy; but being discourses inserted,  
 “ and not of the contexture of the narration, they  
 “ indeed commend the knowledge of the writer, but  
 “ not the history itself; the nature wherof is merely  
 “ narrative. In others, there be subtile conjectures  
 “ at the secret aims and inward cogitations of such  
 “ as fall under their pen; which is also none of the  
 “ least virtues in a history, where the conjecture is  
 “ thoroughly grounded, not forced to serve the  
 “ purpose of the writer in adorning his style, or  
 “ manifesting his subtilty in conjecturing. But these  
 “ conjectures cannot often be certain, unless withal  
 “ so evident that the narration itself may be suffi-  
 “ cient to suggest the same also to the reader. But  
 “ THUCYDIDES is one, who though he never digress  
 “ to read a lecture, moral or political, upon his own  
 “ text, nor enter into men’s hearts, further than the  
 “ actions themselves evidently guide him, is yet  
 “ accounted the most politic historiographer that  
 “ ever writ. The reason whereof I take to be this;  
 “ he filleth his narrations with that choice of matter,

“ and ordereth them with that judgment, and with  
 “ such perspicuity and efficacy expresseth himself,  
 “ that (as Plutarch saith) he maketh his auditor  
 “ a spectator. For he setteth his reader in the assem-  
 “ blies of the people, and in the senates, at their  
 “ debating ; in the streets, at their seditions ; and  
 “ in the field, at their battles ! So that look how  
 “ much a man of understanding might have added  
 “ to his experience, if he had then lived a beholder  
 “ of their proceedings, and familiar with the men  
 “ and business of the time ; so much *almost*  
 “ may he profit now, by attentive reading of the  
 “ same here written. He may from the narrations  
 “ draw out lessons to himself, and of himself be  
 “ able to trace the drifts and counsels of the actors  
 “ to their seat ”

You observed and I admitted, that the truth is  
 here somewhat exaggerated. It would require infi-  
 nite dexterity, as well as a continual sacrifice of  
 vanity, to write in this manner ; but, so far as it is  
 attainable, how instructive and delightful !

Even Hume, who tells his story so well, is often

ostentatious of his opinions, and becomes rather a philosophical commentator than a skilful historian. So does a greater writer still, Burke, both in his "Account of the European Settlements" and in his masterly "Fragment of English history" but he never is deficient in vivacity and variety. One source of both these excellencies may be found in the judicious practice of borrowing freely from the original writers, and from the documents of the times, altering the expression only by discarding obscure, uncouth, and redundant words.

How striking is this short passage, in a speech of Edward the Fourth to his Parliament! "The injuries that I have received are known everywhere and the eyes of the world are fixed upon me to see with what countenance I suffer." If actual events could often be related in this way, there would be more books in circulating libraries than romances and travels.

This lively and graphic style is plainly the best, though now and then the historian's criticism is wanted to support a startling fact, or to explain a

confused transaction. Thus the learned Rudbeck, in his "Atlantica" ascribing an ancient temple in Sweden to one of Noah's sons, warily adds "'twas 'probably the youngest'" You will, of course, hasten to study his book—it is only in four volumes folio.

I cannot help adding, that if you will read, with a pencil in your hand, more than one celebrated historian, you will be surprised to find yourself marking so many grave observations, worthy of the cautious Swede.

There is one grand incident in our own annals, presenting the means of producing a work at least as interesting and instructive as any public story, ancient or modern. You know that I mean the establishment of American independence. Do I say too much in speaking of this as the principal event in all civil history?

Only think of the magnitude and the nature of the question at issue; of its consequence as an example; of the successful termination of the struggle; of the elevated and accomplished actors both in the United States and in England. The



battle was as much fought at home as abroad; and some of the combatants were the King, Lord Chatham, Lord North, Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox, General Washington, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jefferson. Think, too, of the Manifestoes, the Proclamations, the Declaration of Independence, and of the Speeches, which would furnish abler and more authentic examples of eloquence than are found in Thucydides, Livy, or Tacitus. These dramatic documents have always been the allowed and admired ornaments of history.

One surprising instance, equally honourable to the speaker and to the assembly that bore it, is the famous exclamation of Lord Chatham, "My Lords! "I rejoice that America has resisted" Do not forget that this man had been minister, and meant to be minister again.

Oh! how I shall regret if these random thoughts should add to your perplexities, instead of exciting you to burst through them! Not one syllable of our mountain-talk would I have recalled to your recollection, if you had not owned that you had yet to begin.

For my own gratification, I would much rather have your "Lectures" than "the History," but not so feel the Public; to whom you have made a promise, or are thought to have made one. A seat in the House of Commons, while it must improve your manner, by substituting the tone of business for that of dissertation, will, alas! encroach upon your leisure, and perhaps endanger your health.

When you come hither to restore the latter, pray bring all the papers that you can want, for the barn will hold what the cottage cannot.

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The reader cannot but be interested by the following remarkable letter, from the second President of the United States. When that eminent person was Minister at our Court, the author had the good fortune to be much acquainted with him, and mentioned his thoughts of writing an account of the American contest. He afterwards wrote to Mr. Adams, and here is the reply.

TO RICHARD SHARP, ESQ. M. P.

*Quincy, near Boston, Feb. 27th, 1811.*

PURSUÉ your design of writing an History of the "Glorious Struggle" and you will produce a work of much value to the public. I should read it with high expectations but give me leave to suggest that the period you have defined, from 1775 to 1783 was by no means the most important nor the most interesting eight years of the Revolution. The Revolution was, in truth, effected in the period from 1761 to 1775. I mean a complete Revolution in the minds of the people: a total change of the opinions and affections of the people, and a full confidence in the practicability of a Union of the Colonies. All this was done and the principles all established and the system matured before the year 1775. The war and the peace followed of course.

There is danger that the war and its termination may mislead other nations into rash enterprises, without the necessary preparation. The object and

end, as well as the principles and means must be well considered and defined, and be made known and understood by the people, and that people must have intellect, information and integrity enough to be depended on through severe trials.

The people of America from their singular situation, education, occupations and character have gone through all this. But, without any national pride, or any fastidious national antipathies, I cannot believe, from any thing I have seen or read, that any other people are capable of it. In all other nations a Revolution will be only an exchange of one absolute government for another.

Elective governments not only give full scope to the hopes of all men, but afford continual temptations to aspire: and we have already seen very bold and daring strokes of a determined and desperate ambition.

But your example and your reasons, admonish me that a delicacy on these subjects not only will become, but are necessary for your obliged friend and servant

JOHN ADAMS.

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## TO A YOUNG MAN AT OXFORD.

*London May 17th, 1825.*

YOUR mother tells me, that she approves of your going this summer to Ambleside, accompanied by some other students, to read with a tutor.

I have seen with much pleasure that it has of late become usual with the young mathematicians, hoping for "honours" to spend the vacation in this manner. Such a place of residence is even more suitable to those delighting in classical literature; for what can agree better than poetry with the woods and mountains? The bards are ever avowing their passion for the country, and you must have remarked the same in the finest prose-writers. Pliny owns, in a letter to Tacitus, that at Rome "*poemata quiescunt; quæ tu inter nemora et lucos commodissimè perfici putas*" The following passages in the 9th and 10th Sections of the celebrated dialogue "*de causis corruptæ eloquentiæ*" leave little doubt as

to its author, notwithstanding the long and learned disputes on the subject. "Adjice quod poetis, si modo dignum aliquid elaborare et efficere velint, relinquenda conversatio amicorum et jucunditas urbis, in nemora et lucos recedendum est"—\*\*\*\*  
*Nemora vero, et luci*, tantam mihi afferunt voluptatem, ut inter præcipuos carminum fructus numerem, quod nec in strepitu, nec sedente ante ostium litigatore, nec inter sordes ac lacrymas reorum componuntur: sed secedit animus in loca pura atque innocentia, fruiturque sedibus sacris"

I hope you mean to be an indefatigable student, though you talk of visiting *all* the lakes.—Yet beware! it is pleasanter to sail about than to read at home. However, it will give me pleasure to learn that the hints which you request, have saved your time, and prevented needless fatigue.

The guides are not always to be trusted, for they naturally wish to keep you as long as they can; and, too often, they arrange the journey with a view to dine at the most comfortable, or the most grateful inn.

You will pass so near to the beautiful scenery of **BOLTON ABBEY**, that I advise you to employ one day, at least, in visiting the walks and drives made by the clergyman of the place. Sit down on every seat in the valley of the Wharfe and in Posforth glen, whose brook falls into the river. The waterfall has much beauty. The inn is excellent, but small; and you should bespeak beds, by writing to Mr. Wilson, Devonshire Arms, Bolton Bridge, near Addingham, Yorkshire.

Get out of your carriage, on the bridge at Kirby Lonsdale, to look up and down the stream, and to walk by the foot-path to the Church-yard.

Sleep at **BOWNESS**, which is the port-town of Windermere.

The views from **RAYRIG-BANK** (about three quarters of a mile distant) are superlative.

Row to the Ferry-house, going as close as you can to **STORRS**, that you may see both its fronts.

At the Ferry, ascend to the Station-house.

Stop a day at **LOWWOOD INN**, that you may walk on the bowling-green, and up the Trout-beck Lane

till you see the lower end of the lake. The best view, however, is only one hundred yards up the lane.

At AMBLESIDE, you will have time enough to visit every interesting spot over and over again.

You should go daily to the water-fall behind the Salutation Inn and, almost as frequently, cross the meadows leading to a wooden bridge over the ROTHAM, in order to walk up the stream to RYDALE. It runs about coquetting with you all the way, "now advancing, now retreating"

At RYDALE, see the water-falls in the Park and, as you are fortunate enough to have a letter to Mr. Wordsworth, you will probably see his grounds, which are admirably laid out. The terraced foot-path from the garden-gate to GRASMERE is delightful.

Ride by Clappersgate, and Loughrigg-tarn, to Grasmere.

The upper end of CONISTON-WATER should be seen.

The road to KESWICK abounds in beauties.

Get out of your carriage to look about at a very



little common called "Browtop." It is half a mile before entering the town.

Walk to FRIAR'S CRAGG, and do not forget to ascend the swelling-field, close by, called "STRAND-HAG." Just at the top of this gentle ascent, at the gate, are four or five views, as different as they are striking. What a spot for a house or a pavilion! "Oh! si angulus ille!" The lake seems to belong to the lawn.

Walk by the parsonage to ORMATHWAITE, or rather to the field on the left of the house.

Ride to BORRODALE, seeing Barrow and Lodoar water-falls, and proceed by Gatesgarth to BUTTERMERE. Here, while the dinner is being dressed, walk to CROMACK Lake; and see SCALE-FORCE, if you have time.

Return to Keswick by NEWLANDS.

The higher end of WAST-WATER is very grand, but I do not like to send you on so long a pilgrimage. There is a short horse-path over the STY-HEAD, but it introduces you to the scenery disadvantageously.

You can ride from Keswick to ULLESWATER over the mountain (saving some distance); but you must not lose your way, as I once did in a fog.

Stop at LYULPH's Tower and, after sitting by the ARA-FORCE, go up the torrent nearly half a mile, crossing the wooden bridge, which hangs over the fall. A path has been made by Mr. Howard, who is good enough to allow strangers to walk there.

From the front of Mr. Marshall's place (Hallstead) is the noblest lake and mountain-view in the north.

You must ask to see the walks in Mr. Askew's grounds.

Near to PATTERDALE-HALL is a water-fall.

The slate-quarries command fine views, and, if you have time, you should walk up the GOLD-RILL to BECKSTONE'S FARM, to HARTSOP village, and to the HALL.

Having seen Wharfe-dale as you went, you had best return by WENSLEY-DALE, Hackfall and Studley, unless you wish to see LIVERPOOL, and the rail-road just commenced.

You will have observed that I trouble you with few remarks and fewer exclamations, supposing that you will travel with your eyes open.

The most complete description of the lakes is Mr. Wordsworth's, but it has far higher merits than mere accuracy. Gray's letters, though he saw but little, are exquisite.

There are two mistakes often made by travellers in the North and on the Continent: that of loitering on the road to visit inferior places before they reach the Lakes, or the Alps, and that of wasting time and strength in hunting after novelty, instead of dwelling on the noblest scenes and getting them by heart. Much needless toil is undergone to fill the journal and the sketch-book. Madame de Stael complained to me, at Coppet, that she was often annoyed by travellers, who, as they had nothing to say to her, must have come merely to record the visit in their diaries, or to add a paragraph to their letters.

## ON POVERTY.

IN De Rulhière's *Anecdotes of the Revolution in Russia*, there is a short story exemplifying that decay of the ancient respect for rank, and that growth of a regard for wealth, so observable of late in most parts of the world.

ODART, a Piedmontese conspirator for Catherine, used to say, "I see there is no regard for any thing but money, and money I will have. I would go this night and set fire to the palace for money; and when I had got enough, I would retire to my own country, and there live like an honest man." More than once the Empress offered him a title: "No, Madam, I thank you" said Odart; "money, money, if you please"

He did get money, went to Nice, and there he is said to have lived as became a gentleman.

Since this over-estimate of wealth is almost universal, it can be no wonder that the rich are so vain

and the poor so envious. I know that it is only repeating the tritest of common-places to observe that both exaggerate its advantages.

“ Je lis au front de ceux qu'un vain faste environne,

“ Que la Fortune vend ce qu'on croit qu'elle donne ”

It must, however, be owned, that the greatest are willing enough to consider the humblest as their fellow-creatures, when they stand in need of their help. A prince in danger of being drowned would not wonder at being saved by the *humanity* of a common sailor, and a general, before a battle, addresses his “ brave *fellow-soldiers* ” Indeed many persons do the poor the honour of expecting them to be spotless. Too often is it deemed a good excuse for refusing them alms that they have failings like our own.

There are many advantages in this variety of conditions, one of which is boasted of by a Divine, who rejoices that, between both classes, “ all the holy days of the Church are properly kept ; since the “ rich observe the feasts, and the poor observe the “ fasts ”

To be more serious, it is fortunate for the Christian world that our public worship tends at once to abase the proud and to uplift the dejected ; while a similar effect results in a free country from its elections, where the haughtiest are obliged to go hat in hand begging favours from the lowliest. Nor should the lofty be ashamed, since it has so happened that the best benefactors of the human race have been poor men ; such as Socrates and Epaminondas ; such as many of the most illustrious Romans, and the inspired founders of our Faith. The poor too have a strong temptation to be honest : it is their only pride.

Among the North American Indians a wish for wealth is even now considered as unworthy of a brave man, and the CHIEF is often the poorest man of the tribe.

Mr. Burke says truly, " The people maintain the government, and not the government the people. " The rich are the pensioners of the poor. They " are under an absolute hereditary and indefeasible " dependence on those who labour. That class of

“ dependent pensioners called ‘ the rich ’ is so extremely small, that if their throats were cut, all they consume in a year would not give a bit of bread and cheese for one night’s supper to those who labour ”

Bossuet, in one of his best sermons, has the following characteristic passages :

“ Je dis donc, ô riches du siècle ! que vous avez tort de traiter les pauvres avec mépris : nous trouverions peut-être, si nous voulions monter à l’origine des choses, qu’ils n’auroient pas moins de droit que vous aux biens que vous possédez. Non, non, ô riches, ce n’est pas pour vous seuls, que Dieu fait lever son soleil, ni qu’il arrose la terre, ni qu’il fait profiter dans son sein une si grande diversité de semences : les pauvres y ont leur part aussi bien que vous. J’avoue que Dieu ne leur a donné aucun fonds en propriété, mais il leur a assigné leur subsistence sur vos biens.

“ Quelle gloire, en vérité, chrétiens, si nous la savions bien comprendre ! Par conséquent, bien loin de les mépriser, vous les devriez respecter, les

“considerant comme les personnes que Dieu vous  
“adresse et vous recommande. Vive Dieu! dit le  
“Seigneur, (c’est jurer par moi-même) le ciel et la  
“terre et tout ce qu’ils renferment est à moi. Vous  
“êtes obligés de me rendre la redevance de tous vos  
“biens, mais certes, pour moi, je n’ai que faire ni de  
“vos offrandes, ni de vos richesses ; je suis votre  
“Dieu et n’ai pas besoin de vos biens. Je ne peux  
“souffrir de nécessité qu’en la personne des pauvres  
“que j’avoue pour mes enfans : c’est à eux que  
“j’ordonne que vous payiez, fidèlement, le tribut que  
“vous me devez. Que si on les refuse, si on les  
“maltraite, il n’entend pas qu’ils portent leurs  
“plaintes par devant des juges mortels : lui même  
“il écoutera leurs cris du plus haut des cieux ;  
“comme ce qu’il est dû aux pauvres, ce sont ses  
“propres dêniers, il en a réservé la connoissance à  
“son tribunal. C’est moi qui les vengerai, dit il : je  
“ferai miséricorde à qui leur fera miséricorde, je  
“serai impitoyable à qui sera impitoyable pour eux.

“Merveilleuse dignité des pauvres ! la grace, la  
“miséricorde, le pardon est entre leurs mains : et



“il y a des personnes assez insensées pour les  
“mépriser !”

There is, notwithstanding, so little danger that the indigent will be made supercilious by such considerations that it is needless to remind them of the disadvantages of their condition. The twofold danger of being starved both by hunger and by cold is enough; but there is another inferiority, which it is most painful to reflect upon. It is this. When a child is taken from an opulent mother, she comforts herself by saying, “I thank God that all that could be done has been done to save it” but the grief of a poor woman is heightened into agony by the belief that a physician and proper attendance might have preserved her little one. Such thoughts are the harder to bear, because the social affections of the needy are necessarily cherished by the habit of doing those humble services to each other which are rendered to the rich by their menials, and perhaps this necessity alone may counteract the inevitable and therefore pardonable selfishness arising from scanty subsistence.

Upon the whole, there can be no doubt that inequality of condition is so much more seeming than real, as to suggest unanswerable dissuasives from envy and discontent, as well as from hard-heartedness and vainglory.

If the difficulty can be surmounted of persuading the poor to be contented with their portion in this world, there will be little or no trouble in overcoming the reluctance of the rich to prefer their larger share.

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#### ON WAR.

So much has been well said against war, that it has the air of a plagiarism when any of its unavoidable evils are alluded to, yet there is a short passage, in Dr. Aikin's *Life of Howard the philanthropist*, placing one of them in so striking a light, that it must excite the most painful reflections in a reader of common humanity.

In one of his benevolent journeys, he writes from

Moscow, that “ no less than 70,000 *recruits* for the “ army and navy have died in the Russian hospitals “ during a single year ”

He was an accurate man, incapable of saying any thing but the truth, and therefore this horrible fact cannot but heighten our detestation both of war and of despotism. It has, however, been scarcely spoken of in Europe; while other hateful crimes, though affecting only individuals, have justly become the perpetual objects of pity and indignation. For instance, the cruel murders of the Princesse de Lamballe and of Louis the Sixteenth.

The truth is, that despotism is ever destroying its millions silently and unnoticed; while sedition is generally tumultuous, and always dreaded and detested. So many are interested in painting exaggerated pictures of its mischiefs, that the world is kept in perpetual alarm, and even the writers themselves become unable to judge impartially between oppression and resistance; as an artist is said to have drawn the devil so hideous that he lost his senses by looking at his own colours.

There are few riots without some grievance. "Jupiter" says Lucian, "seldom has recourse to his thunder, but when he is in the wrong" and, at the close of a long military life, Monsieur de Vendôme owned that, "in the eternal disputes between the mules and the muleteers, the mules were generally in the right"

All our praiseworthy toil and expense, in building infirmaries and asylums, cannot save a hundredth part of the lives, nor alleviate a hundredth part of the afflictions brought upon the human race by one unnecessary war. "Next to the calamity of losing a battle is that of gaining a victory" is reported to have been said by our great commander, while walking up and down a room in great emotion, on the evening of the bloody day of Waterloo.

It is, therefore, much to be lamented that so many persons of influence are benefited by war, as the tolls at Cork are raised by the slaughtering season. Alas ! "Multis utile bellum !"

Great conquerors are curses on mankind while they live and, when they die, they leave no relics

like the skins of their predecessors, I had almost said their ancestors, the wolves and bears.

How easily are the silly victims deluded ! What a humiliating picture of human life is exhibited in the hand-bills usually stuck up all over London !  
 “ All aspiring heroes, who wish to serve their king  
 “ and country, defend the protestant religion, and  
 “ live for ever, may receive ten shillings and six-  
 “ pence by applying at the Britannia public-house  
 “ in Wapping ” Such temptations, who can with-  
 stand ? Fame, future happiness, and half-a-guinea !

Since statesmen complain so much of what they call “ Declamation ” why will they render it so easy and so unanswerable ?

In one of Foote’s Farces, Dr. Last asks boast-  
 ingly, “ Have you heard of my *black powder* ? ”  
 As if he had been the discoverer of so famous a  
 medicine, though all the state-quacks, since the  
 invention of artillery, have been as fond and as  
 proud too of the doctor’s prescription.

As for the writer he can truly say, with Petrarch,  
 “ Io vo gridando pace, pace, pace ” though not for

Fontenelle's finical reason, who disliked war because it spoiled conversation. This was merely frivolous ; but what will be the reader's indignation, should he now learn for the first time, Lord Chesterfield's courtly way of feeling on this awful subject ? "The King of Prussia's victory came too late. "There are six or seven thousand less of the human "species than there were a month ago, and this "seems to me to be all. *However I am glad of it,* "on account of the pleasure and glory which it "gives the King of Prussia.!!" Letter 102.

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#### ON INTOLERANCE AND BIGOTRY.

THE crime of Intolerance is not only hateful, but so ridiculous, that many of its absurdities are scarcely credible.

The Chancellor de l'Hôpital was called an *atheist*, because he refused to be a persecutor : Galileo for thinking the earth turns round : Descartes for saying there are innate ideas : Gassendi and Locke for denying them. Father Hardouin proved, very much

to his own satisfaction, that Malebranche, Pascal, Arnauld and Nicole, (the most pious of men,) would certainly be damned. The mother of Louis XIV. was shocked by the notion that Jansenists might be saved, and cried out, "Ah! fi! fi! de la Grace." In Hispaniola, some Spaniards made a vow to sacrifice every day twelve Indians in honour of the twelve Apostles. When Savoy and Geneva exchanged a village or two, Geneva engaged to tolerate the Catholic inhabitants for *twenty-five years*! If the Mahometans conclude a treaty of peace with Christians, they forthwith proceed to the mosque, and ask pardon of God Almighty for discontinuing to cut the throats of his children, on whom they imprecate calamities. Now it is unfortunately, or fortunately true, that curses are seldom quite ineffectual, inasmuch as they have a tendency to bring down well merited punishments on the heads of those who pray that evils may fall on others. But there would be no end of enumerating these weak and wicked creeds and practices, and I shall mention only one more.

Turgot proposed to the King of France to omit a clause in the King's oath, which pledged him to "exterminer les hérétiques "

Malesherbes supported Turgot. Louis wished to make the alteration; but Maurepas prevailed upon him not to do so. "Le Roi ceda. Il ne changea pas la formule du serment, mais il ne prononça pas les paroles, qui répugnaient à son humanité. Il y suppléa, d'une voix basse et en rougissant, quelques mots inintelligibles. Le procès fut conforme à celui du règne précédent" \*

It has been asked by a great author—"What does it signify, whether you deny a God or speak ill of him?" A question well answered by another sage, when he declares, "I would rather men should say, that there never was such a man as Plutarch, than that Plutarch, was an ill-natured, mischievous fellow"

A most affecting instance of a contrary way of thinking is found in the pious poet Cowper's belief that "somewhere in infinite space there is a world

\* Vie de Turgot, p. 220.



“beyond the province of mercy” and that he himself had been selected as an example of the Almighty’s sovereign power and indisputable right “to do what he pleased with his creatures” in dooming him to everlasting misery, though not the very worst of human beings. Perhaps there is not another known case of so heart-rending an illusion.

Yet Bigotry is just as amiable and as respectable in her indulgences as in her severities, in her partialities as in her persecutions. She deified most of the Roman emperors, and she has graced the calendar of saints with the names of many disgusting fools and villains.

The Scythians reasoned well when pursued by the would-be son of Jupiter Ammon, that “he who did so much harm to men could not be divine” Their inference, however, has been carried too far by the African people, who were of opinion that “God is too good to require that his creatures should pray to him for blessings” and therefore they worshipped only the evil spirits.

There can be no reasonable doubt that it is better

to believe too much than too little, since, as Boswell observes, (most probably in Johnson's words), "a man may breathe in foul air, but he must die in an exhausted receiver"

Much of the scepticism that we meet with is necessarily affectation or conceit, for it is as likely that the ignorant, weak, and indolent, should become mathematicians as reasoning unbelievers. Patient study and perfect impartiality must precede rational conviction, whether ending in faith or in doubt. Need it be asked how many are capable of such an examination? But whether men come honestly by their opinions or not, it is more advisable, though less easy, to refute than to burn, or even to scorch them.

Galileo would not have been persecuted, could he have been answered; and Sir William Jones tells us that, even now, the Bramins require a man to be punished who overpowers them in argument.

## ON THE PASSIONS.

I HAVE heard that a gentleman, to whom an estate had been bequeathed, called up his servants and addressed them thus: "Ladies and gentlemen! "I hope you will have the goodness to remember "that I have got only one more estate, of one "thousand pounds per annum, and I beg that every "one of you will not be spending at that rate"

Something like this should be said to our different appetites, for the consequence of freely indulging all, would be ruinous to body, mind, and fortune. Yet each must be moderately satisfied, since gratifying one alone would be like giving food to a single head of Cerberus, making the others only more voracious.

Such, notwithstanding, is the complicated constitution of human nature, that a man, without a predominant inclination, is not likely to be either useful or happy.

“Chrysologue est tout et n'est rien” He who is every thing is nothing, is as true of our sensitive as of our intellectual nature. He is rather a bundle of little likings than a compact and energetic individual. A strong desire soon subdues all the weaker, and rules us with the united force of all that it subjugates.

Vivid perceptions and intense feelings have, sometimes, a sort of fascination, compelling us to rush headlong into danger: as in the delirious giddiness caused by looking down a frightful precipice. Action so commonly follows lively sensation that the habit becomes inveterate and, now and then, irresistible, even when certainly fatal. Any desire, suffered to rule uncontrolled, quickly gains this terrible ascendancy and even madness itself is, sometimes, only outrageous selfishness.

Such being the force of human feelings, it must embitter our daily lives if our employments are unsuited to our talents and wishes; yet, how few, alas! are so fortunate as to be gaining either wealth or fame while gratifying an inclination.

The well-known doctrine of a master-passion is only an exaggeration of the fact, as displayed in the characters of most persons, especially of those who have warm constitutions, and it is therefore of great importance to watch the growth of such a powerful despot in ourselves and in others, if we hope to govern or to understand either. Yet it is, in truth, surprising how few are sufficiently acquainted with themselves to see, distinctly, what their own motives actually are. It is a rare as well as a great advantage for a man to know his own mind.

If we attend to what is going on we have, at first, a voice in chusing our own sovereign; for the monarchy, though absolute, is elective, and much indeed does it concern us to chuse our ruler wisely.

Ambition and vanity are cruel taskmasters; and it is only to our home-bred affections that we must trust for real pleasures. The world tempts and mocks us; first makes us thirsty and then gives us bitter water to drink, and this is remarkable that our regard for others is fitted rather to give us pleasure than pain. A father may be more gratified by

his son's success than by his own; yet he cannot feel so acutely either his disappointments, or his toothache. Even when defeated and mortified, the social feelings are not wholly unpleasing, for the French actress's exclamation, while speaking of an unfaithful lover's once deserting her, was quite natural. "Ah! c'étoit le bon tems! j'étois bien "malheureuse" No colours are so gay as those reflected by the clouds that have passed away.

It cannot be denied that our warmest emotions, though subjecting us to innumerable temptations, have many countervailing benefits. Though all the passions are subtle sophists and ever justify themselves, yet they are not without their use in our mental improvement, since, probably more prejudices are removed by passion than by philosophy. Temper too, even ill-temper, is more frank and honest than a calm, calculating self-love; or, at least, it puts others on their guard, by exhibiting the character plainly, as an insect shown in a microscope.

Of the generous impulses, it is needless to point out the merits. They are, luckily, felt in all condi-

tions of life. Admiration, for instance, is found in all, especially in unspoiled youth and in the unambitious common people. What a simultaneous burst of applause from pit, box, and gallery, instantly follows a magnanimous deed or sentiment! "*Les grandes pensées viennent du cœur*" says a most discerning, self-taught, man of the world.

In the voluptuous and self-indulgent vices, there is often some mixture of kindness, some little regard to others; but the vain, too commonly, and the ambitious, always, are purely selfish, admitting of no partners in success, and hating their dearest friends, should such, unfortunately, happen to be their competitors for fame and power. She must be an antiquated beauty who can hear with perfect pleasure a compliment paid to her own daughter's rival charms and no aspiring public man can "bear a brother near the throne"

All solitary enjoyments quickly pall, or become painful, so that, perhaps, no more insufferable misery can be conceived than that which must follow incommunicable privileges. Only imagine a human being

condemned to perpetual youth, while all around him decay and die! Oh! how sincerely would he call upon death for deliverance! No means of suicide would be left unattempted.

What, then, is to be done? Are we to struggle against all our desires? Luckily we should strive in vain; or, could we succeed, we should be fools for our pains. To strangle a natural feeling is a partial suicide; but there is no need to extinguish the fertility of the soil, lest the harvest should be unwholesome. Is it not better, far, to root up the weeds, and to plant fruits and flowers instead? Were but a tithe of the time and the thought, usually spent in learning the commonest accomplishments, bestowed upon regulating our lives, how many evils would be avoided or lessened! how many pleasures would be created or increased!



## ON SELF-CONTRUL.

MADAME De Lambert said to her son " Mon ami, " ne vous permettez que les sottises qui vous feront " un grand plaisir " and the advice is often needed. It is surprising how much trouble is sometimes taken by the weak and wicked to defeat their own purposes in wrong-doing. He that seeks too impetuously his own sensual gratification, forgetting that moderation is the indispensable condition of enjoyment, often blunts or altogether destroys the appetite itself, or finds it to be the source of pain instead of pleasure. An inordinate lover of money gets pilloried in the gazette as a bankrupt. An ambitious man, thirsting for power, becomes a mere slave to constituents or to ministers, and a vain man, sighing for applause, and even willing to be envied, makes himself so ridiculous as to be laughed at, instead of being admired.

These are vices that blunder in their calculations, but there are others, that spring from a malicious disposition, whose victims are disinterested, in a bad sense, and actually take a sort of insane pleasure in hurting themselves as well as others. They break their neighbours' windows, but 'tis with their own guineas. Cardan in one of his letters, or in his own life, confesses that it was not unusual with him to drop burning wax on his arm, seeking for excitement even in bodily pain.

There is perhaps a superficial resemblance in this strange propensity to the delight that we take in tragedy, and to our sympathy with the afflictions of others; but they are wholly different, both in their origin, and in their nature. In our taste for pathetic fictions there is no belief that the incidents are real, and our compassion is a kind fellow-feeling that leads to friendly services, and derives no satisfaction from the sufferings of those whom we console or relieve. It is the good emotion and not the bad event that gratifies. The outward circumstance only calls forth the inborn sensibility.

At an inn in Sweden there was the following inscription, in English, on the wall "You will find, " at Trollhatte, excellent bread, meat and wine, " provided you bring them with you " and this will almost serve for a description of human life, so much depends upon the temper that events are met with, and on the prudence that foresees and provides against them. What pleasure can he expect who must always travel with a fretful, discontented, suspicious companion, with whom his dissatisfaction must be perpetual, inasmuch as he cannot be ignorant that the evils infesting him are well-deserved? And the case is much worse should he have the sad advantage of being at once silly and self-satisfied, criminal and tranquil: for this implies the extinction of all that could assuage the suffering, or remove the disease. Fortunately this deadly quiet must be rare, for all men regret the good qualities that they have lost, and the very worst of us like good humour and generosity—in others.

## ON DEATH.

*Extract from a Letter to a Friend.*

A MAN being the only animal that knows he shall die, he would be much worse off than the brutes that perish, were it not for the hope of another and a better life. To what useful purpose could this painful foreknowledge tend, if it were not designed to make him careful of his conduct here, that he might not endanger his happiness hereafter? Is not this one proof of a future state? And it seems to me that another argument may be derived from the great improbability that such a poor short-lived creature as man should have imagined a scheme of creation, so much more noble and intelligible, so much better reconciling the benevolence of the Deity with his justice, than the fact would be, were the human race utterly to vanish, after a few brief years, rendered more miserable, perhaps, by our virtues, than by our

failings. On this supposition too it will be the same in a few hours, whether we have each been an ornament or a disgrace, a blessing or a curse to society.

Yet were this world all, it would even then be unwise to cherish a tormenting apprehension of death, since no wishes, no efforts, no prayers can avert the inevitable and swift conclusion.

“ In the dry leaf, that falls from every tree,  
“ An emblem of our own short life we see.”

Since then it is to be so short let us make the most of it, and exist as much as possible.

Were only some men condemned to die, while others were permitted to live on for ever, or were the appointed years of a few to be as many as those of Methusalem, while the mass of mankind were limited to three-score and ten, uneasiness, fear and discontent would be natural and almost reasonable. But, hastening as we all are to the grave, it is our interest to submit quietly and even cheerfully. Indeed, some may be said to die of the fear of dying, and it was believed of no less a man than Dr. Johnson

that death must be a blessing to him, as it relieved him from that incessant terror. There is a passage in Vigée's "Epître à la Mort" so gay that I must copy it.

" Viens me trouver, mais sans façon,  
 " Mais sans avis préliminaire  
 " . . . . .  
 " Te voila vraiment attrayante !  
 " On t'annonce, je t'attendais ;  
 " Tu me souris, et je te fais  
 " Une révérence décente.  
 " Les complimens ne sont pas longs ;  
 " Bon jour Monsieur ! Bon jour Madame !  
 " —Veuillez vous ? De toute mon ame.  
 " Tu prends mon bras, et nous partons."

This cheer of mind is very different from that weariness of life which welcomes and sometimes hastens its end, for certainly, the old gentleman of Geneva was not to be envied who being saved by a servant's bleeding him when in an apoplectic fit, left him a legacy upon the condition of his never doing so again. A French writer of eminence has said that "happy are the children who die in the "cradle, for they can have known nothing but the "smiles and embraces of a mother" but to those believing in an hereafter, behold ! how entirely the

scene changes! Instead of a dark blank curtain what interesting visions appear as the five acts of human existence go on! This expectation

“ Qui ravit à l'espoir du vice,  
“ L'asile horrible du néant,”

is so consolatory to better persons, that a good and wise man has told us he often prayed God to make him better and better and take him when he was best.

Instances we must all have known of many who look forward to their own departure with tranquillity; but the decease of our near and dear connections it is very hard to bear; sometimes harder after a time than just when the calamity happens, for then it appears like a common temporary absence, but too soon alas! it is found to be for ever. In this affliction it is amiable as well as natural to exaggerate our loss, and, in truth, if we may believe the tomb-stones, all the virtues lie buried in the church-yard. There, however, the living may learn many a useful lesson, which the youngest should read with awe, and the proudest with humiliation.

## ON POLITICAL AGITATIONS. ' .

A FRENCH gentleman said to Monsieur Colbert—  
 “ You found the state-carriage overturned on one side,  
 “ and you have overturned it on the other ” This  
 was probably untrue, but it must be confessed, that  
 there is always some danger of destroying institu-  
 tions by unskilful or violent changes. A conflagra-  
 tion may be extinguished without a deluge.

It is not only hard to distinguish between too  
 little and too much, but between the good and evil  
 intentions of the different reformers. One man calls  
 out “ Fire ” that he may save the house, another,  
 that he may run away with the furniture.

I am inclined to believe, that in revolutions, more  
 harm is done by hurry and self-conceit, than by  
 mischievous purposes. Very few indeed should pre-  
 sume to lay their hands on the Ark, but

“ Fools rush in where angels fear to tread ”

and unluckily,

“ A down-hill reformation rolls apace ”



When honest men infer from their desire to do good, that they have the knowledge and talents requisite to govern wisely, it is incalculable what evil-doers they may innocently become ! What an eternal shock of purposes where each man pursues his own crude schemes, with all the obstinacy of self-satisfied integrity ! And such schemes, as have often been proposed, are scarcely wiser, or more feasible than that of the whimsical fellow in the Spectator who said " St. Paul's does not please me : " I think to pull it down, and rebuild it." Yet to leave serious grievances imperfectly redressed, or indisputable improvements unattained, merely through a vague apprehension of innovation, is at once a great and a common evil. There is much truth in Bacon's complaint " That some men object too much, " consult too long, adventure too little, repent too " soon, and seldom drive business home "

Even moderation itself may sometimes be folly or cowardice. On the Exclusion-bill being opposed in the House of Commons, Colonel Titus exclaimed both wisely and eloquently, " We are advised to be

"moderate: but I do not take moderation to be a  
 "prudential virtue in all cases. If I were flying  
 "from thieves, should I ride moderately, lest I  
 "break my horse's wind? If I were defending my  
 "own life or the lives of my wife and children,  
 "should I strike moderately, lest I put myself out  
 "of breath? And if, Mr. Speaker, we were in a  
 "sinking ship, (no unapt representation of our  
 "decaying commonwealth,) ought we to pump  
 "moderately, lest we bring on a fever?"

Gradual improvements, notwithstanding, are not  
 only safer but better than sudden ones, and more,  
 much more, may be learnt from their example, when  
 well recorded: but history is addicted to dwell on  
 the latter, and rarely investigates the former. Their  
 effects also are more permanent and more extensive;  
 anarchy being only the stakeholder for tyranny.  
 There is, besides, something more terrible to the  
 imagination in the disorderly violences of the multi-  
 tude, than in the organised oppression of a Despot;  
 something more hideous in myriads of reptiles, than  
 in a gigantic beast of prey. If there were no alter-

native but either the absolute government of St. Giles's or of St. James's, who in his senses could hesitate a moment which to prefer?

Besides its other innumerable benefits, a really representative government has the advantage of exempting individual persons from the necessity of becoming political agitators; and, by increasing the competition while it diminishes the rewards, it lessens the numbers of those who can be advanced in reputation or in fortune by office. The young people of this country, in every rank, from a peer's son to a street-sweeper's, are drawn aside from a praiseworthy exertion in honest callings, by having their eyes directed to the public treasure. The rewards of persevering industry are too slow for them, too small, and too insipid. They fondly trust to the great lottery, although the wheel contains so many blanks and so few prizes, hoping that their ticket may be drawn a place, a pension, or a contract, a living, or a stall, a ship, or a regiment, a seat on the bench, or the great-seal.

It is, indeed, most humiliating to witness the

indecent scramble that is always going on for these prizes, the highest born and best educated rolling in the dirt, to pick them up, just as the lowest of the mob do for the shillings or the pence thrown among them by a successful candidate at a contested election.

There not being enough for all, it is fortunate that the topics of consolation are many. "High stations" says D'Alembert, "are, like the top of a pyramid, accessible only to an eagle, or to a creeping thing" The man may be a dwarf though standing on a lofty pedestal, and he will be more apt than others, to mistake his own stature. At the end of a conclave in the Vatican, a poor creature, being elected pope, was thus addrest in a whisper by a cardinal, who had just voted for him, "Your holiness knows that you are ignorant, weak and profligate. "Don't be alarmed!—'Tis the last time you will hear the truth, even from me. *Adieu! je vais vous adorer.*"

## ON VISITING-ACQUAINTANCE.

A LADY complaining that her shoes were burst on the first day of wearing them, the shoemaker exclaimed, "What wonder? why your ladyship actually walked in them"

It is not unusual to hear lamentations, as unreasonable as the lady's, from simple people, who have been disappointed in expecting aid or sympathy from those whom the courtesy of the world calls "friends." None but the inexperienced look for real services from merely fashionable connections, which, like our shadows, follow us only while the sun shines. It is understood, that people are to be charmed with each other, just so long as it is amusing to meet, but not an hour longer, and adversity not only makes some persons very dull, but too often it has an unpardonable effect, in taking away the means of receiving others in return.

The friendships of the world lie chiefly in frequent

visits and in joint subscriptions to a club, or to an opera-box, but as for the mutual self-sacrifices, so delicious to heartfelt affection, it is perfectly ridiculous to rely upon such things from such persons, or to cry out when they are refused. "Nam illæ  
 "ambitosæ fucosæque amicitiaë sunt in quodam  
 "splendore forensi, fructum domesticum non habent" Who does not know how much, or how little is meant, when a correspondent signs himself "your humble servant" and assures you that "he  
 "is ever most faithfully yours?"

The fate of those whose talents raise them suddenly to reputation, is particularly hard. The blaze of a successful first appearance, on the stage, or in parliament, attracts the eyes of all the world. The very domestic ladies, who delight in being "at home," immediately throw open their doors to the petted and, too often, the spoiled child of the season. The vogue lasts throughout the spring and then "farewell," perhaps, "~~for~~ ever" to the shower of flattering notes and pressing invitations. This is bad enough in the world, but the deserted

dupes are often most to be blamed, who mistake notoriety for fame, and curiosity for affection.

Indeed, there are many respectable persons well worth knowing, because their manners towards us mark precisely the actual degree of our fashion at any given moment and is not this being of use? Have we not in them those magical mirrors which show us what is passing in other places?

There is, to speak seriously, another complaint, truly unreasonable. How frequently do we hear severe, yet unmerited reflections on those, who, in consequence of a change of residence, or of pursuits, naturally drop the acquaintance of old associates! Perhaps business may rob them of their leisure; perhaps they may have lost their health or their incomes; perhaps they have given up drawing, and have taken to music; or they have entered into another political party. With the similarity of habits and opinions, it is plain, that the desire to meet must also be lost. Even a long absence may have greatly altered the nature of the connection between two persons sincerely attached. They have

untold secrets, new alliances, new fancies, new sentiments. They have to point out to each other every thing about them, as they show the town to a stranger. Yet a true friend it is shameful to forget; but mere acquaintances may be as innocently changed as our studies, occupations, or amusements. To do mankind justice, it must be owned, that such mortified feelings, as have been alluded to, are seldom expressed when they who give us up, have declined in their circumstances, or in their fashion. It is those who rise that are regretted and abused.

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#### ON A VOICE.

INTENDED FOR A PERIODICAL PAPER PROJECTED IN 1800—BY  
SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

THERE are few natural gifts which may not be turned to profitable use. A well-known person has always gained his living solely by his voice. He once owned that his mother told him (though he generally was too busy in talking himself to



listen to others) that he had begun, while in arms, to tyrannise over the whole family by his cries and screams. A maiden aunt always complained that nobody else could be heard in the house, while he was awake ; nay, his noisy mode of sleeping often deprived his little brothers and sisters of their natural rest.

His parents being poor, he was set to frighten away the rooks from the newly-sown corn lands ; and he then got the two offices of common-crier and counter-tenor in the cathedral, serving at the same time both Church and State. The former he deserted for a short time, having turned field-preacher ; but he soon became worldly again, earning his dinners and evening enjoyments by singing at taverns and ale-houses : yet he always declared, that he got more by his piano manner than by his forte. Whispering at morning-calls and at tea-tables did more for him, a long time, than voting or shouting at elections ; though, in the end, he was greatly advanced by his success in the latter. His great merits, both in canvassing, and in loud speaking

on the hustings, procured for him, unexpectedly, a seat in parliament; where his incessant cheers (friendly or hostile), his readiness to speak against time, and his well-timed calls to order, but above all, his audible pronunciation of the two monosyllables "aye" and "no" quickly made his fortune. He was knighted on being chosen to deliver a corporation address to his Majesty, when passing through the borough.

Now he lives in honourable retirement, swearing impartially at friends and foes. In short, he would have been perfectly happy, if he had not been haunted by a perpetual alarm, lest an asthma, or some disease of the trachea should reduce him to poverty and insignificance.

"Tot rerum vox una fuit."

## ON THE NATURE AND UTILITY OF ELOQUENCE.

READ IN THE MANCHESTER SOCIETY, NOVEMBER 2, 1787, AND  
PRINTED IN THEIR MEMOIRS.

“Fructu, et populari estimatione, Sapientia Eloquentiæ cedit. Ita  
“enim Salomon, *sapiens corde appellabitur prudens, sed*  
“*dulcis eloquio majora reperiet*; haud obscure innuens,  
“Sapientiam famam quandam, et admirationem cuiuspiam conciliare, at in rebus gerendis et vita communi, eloquentiam  
“præcipuè esse efficacem.”

BACON, DE AUGM. SCIEN. LIB. VI. CAP. 3.

I MUST hope to be forgiven, for owning that I consider myself as running some risk in venturing to solicit the attention of the Society, when I have nothing to offer but a few thoughts concerning such a kind of subject as Eloquence. Generally prevalent as the study of Natural Philosophy is, at present, in this kingdom, and particularly cultivated as this science has been by so many of the most eminent members of the Society, I should be somewhat

surprised if the philosophy of the fine arts were held in much estimation. I never could, and I hope I never shall, allow myself to speak or think disrespectfully of other men's pursuits, merely because they differ from mine; but surely I may be permitted to say, that the study of that grand and seducing science, Natural Philosophy, has a tendency to excite in its followers low ideas of arts as useful as any that can be founded even upon its noblest discoveries. It is true, that in distinguishing the arts from each other, the fine arts have been usually opposed to the useful; but is not this improper? and would it not be better to consider them as divided into the liberal and the mechanical? Had I thought eloquence to be a fine art only, in the common sense of that term, I should, in the first instance, have probably saved myself the trouble of thinking or writing about it at all; but, in the second, I should certainly have spared the Society the trouble of reading what I had written. Eloquence, so far as it is an art, is undoubtedly classed with propriety among the fine

arts ; since the means it uses to effect its purposes are not mechanical, and inasmuch as it is so constantly connected with the strongest exercises of the imagination ; but surely it can never be excluded from an eminent place among the useful arts, so long as men have prejudices to be attacked, fears to be allayed, hopes to be excited, or passions to be moved ; and so long, it may be added, as they have understandings to be informed. For, perhaps, the most extensive field for the display of real ability in speaking is the rich, the vast, and hitherto imperfectly-cultivated tract of *probable evidence*.

Within the sphere of demonstration, indeed, eloquence has but little to do, having only room enough to exhibit two of her lowest qualities, perspicuity and order : but demonstration, though absolute so far as her power extends, reigns over a very narrow territory. I will not presume to go quite so far as D'Alembert, and say of eloquence, “ Les prodiges  
 “ qu'elle opère, souvent, entre les mains d'un seul, sur  
 “ toute une nation, sont peutêtre le témoignage le

“plus éclatant de la superiorité d'un homme sur un autre \*” but still, that art which teaches us how we are likely, in the most effectual manner, to make ourselves masters of other men's minds by speech, must be permitted to rank very highly in the scale of useful studies.

It has, in truth, been common with those men of sense who have themselves been deficient in expression, to speak with contempt of the eloquence of others, and to represent it as useless at least, if not highly dangerous; nay, some men have very dexterously and successfully used the art itself to decry its importance, and vilify its tendency †. “Quod sit indignissimum” says Quintilian; “in accusationem orationis, utuntur orandi viribus ‡”

“It is evident” says Mr. Locke, “how men love to deceive, and be deceived; since rhetoric, that

\* Discours préliminaire à l'Encyclopédie.

† The instances of this self-condemning censure are very numerous; but there are few examples so remarkable, or so entertaining, as a long passage in Plato's *Gorgias*, and another in the ninth chapter of Warburton's *Doctrine of Grace*.

‡ Lib. II. cap. 15.

“ powerful instrument of error and deceit, has its  
 “ established professors, is publicly taught, and has  
 “ always been had in great reputation \* ” “ What  
 “ is the end of eloquence ” says Warburton in the  
 chapter already referred to, “ but to stifle reason,  
 “ and inflame passions ? ” The prejudices of Mr.  
 Locke were undoubtedly honest, but they plainly  
 show that he mistook the abuse of the art for the art  
 itself and, happily for mankind, Bacon’s observation  
 is true † : “ No man can well speak fair of things  
 “ sordid and base, but in things honest it is an easy  
 “ matter to be eloquent ” To the bishop’s authority  
 it may be objected, as Thucydides says it was to  
 Cleon’s, “ that because he used to hold the bad side  
 “ in the causes he pleaded, therefore he was ever  
 “ inveighing against eloquence and good speech ‡ ”  
 It were easy to multiply the examples of such mis-  
 representations ; the sophists and the fathers of old,

\* Essay on Human Understanding, Book III. ch. 10.

† De rebus sordidis et indignis, non posse quempiam pulchrè loqui, at de rebus honestis facillimè.—De Aug. Scient. Lib. V. cap. 3.

‡ Thucyd., Lib. III.

the metaphysicians and theologians of late, have united in abusing an art which they wanted judgment as well as taste to understand. Yet in all the various instances of these inconsiderate attacks, it ever appeared to me, that the objections and censures constantly arose from a misconception of the real nature of the art.

“ ’Tis poor eloquence ” says Sir J. Reynolds, “ that only shows a man can talk ”

How often is the epithet “ eloquent ” applied to some ignorant coxcomb, who, in every gesture, look, and word, offends against the first rudiments of speaking, forgetting “ *ars est celare artem* ” or being so vain as to wish to display it. How many times must every man have heard the title of “ orator ” given to some wretched phrase-monger, whose skill consisted only in the frequent use of a gaudy word, or an affected antithesis ! Thus has this efficacious and important art become disreputable and, of course, disregarded by many great and wise men, even among those whose professions are connected with the daily practice of public speaking.



But this misconception is far from being peculiar to those who have not attended to the subject; for perhaps it is hardly possible to produce any definitions of rhetoric from the ancient, and there are but few to be found in modern writings, which do not either lay it open to just objections, or degrade its importance by confining its powers and its application.

It cannot but have been matter of some surprise to such as are conversant with the works of the most celebrated rhetoricians, that they should differ so generally and so widely respecting the nature of the art which they profess to teach. In the fifteenth chapter of his second book, Quintilian states and refutes a great variety of different definitions, which, even in his time, had been given of rhetoric and he censures, among others, those that rested on the authority of names no less eminent than Isocrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. He then proceeds to express and support his own opinion; but less skillfully and less successfully than he had attacked the sentiments of his predecessors. The same irrecon-

cibleable variety of opinion prevails among later writers on this subject; which, to say the truth, has been considered by so many able authors, and by some of such exalted reputation, that I chuse to mention this difference among them, as an apology for presuming to go over the ground which such men have trodden. Since all cannot be right where all disagree, the authority of one serves to counter-balance that of another and thus a man may be allowed to differ from any of them, without dreading the imputation of vanity. “Il faut, dans tous les arts, se donner bien de garde de ces définitions trompeuses, par lesquelles nous osons exclure toutes les beautés, qui nous sont inconnues, ou que la coutume n’a point encore rendues familières”—Volt., sur le Poème Epique.

Aristotle says, it is the office of rhetoric: “Οὐ τὸ ΠΕΙΣΑΙ ἀλλὰ το ἰδεῖν τὰ ὑπαρχοντα ΠΙΘΑΝΑ περί εκαστον.”—Rhet., Lib. I. c. I.

“Officium autem ejus facultatis videtur esse, “dicere appositè ad persuadendum”—Cicero de Inven., Lib. I. s. 5.



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"that art or talent by

"to its end." The same

Quintilian, when he says,

"dicendo, hoc magis

"dicit \* " Fenelon,

Dialogues of the Dead,

saying to Cicero, "Tu faisais dire

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“ Nihil enim est eloquentia, nisi copiosè loquens sapientia ”—Cicero Orat. Part. s. 23.

“ Scientia benè dicendi ”—Quin., Lib. II. cap. 15.

“ Est igitur frequentissimus finis rhetorices *vis persuadendi*. Hæc opinio originem duxit ab *Isocrate*: apud *Platonem* quoque idem ferè dicit ”—Quin., Lib. II. cap. 15.

“ L'éloquence est le talent d'imprimer avec force, et de faire passer avec rapidité, dans l'ame des autres le sentiment profond dont on est pénétré ”  
D'Alembert, sur l'Elocution Oratoire.

“ Eloquence is the power of speaking with fluency and elegance ”—Dr. Johnson's Dictionary.

“ Eloquence is the art of speaking or writing well, so as to move and persuade ”—Chambers's Cyclopædia.

This is but a small sample of the various modes of speaking concerning the subject; but no more need be produced, and to me all these appear either false or imperfect. Perhaps the most sensible, most substantial, and most useful idea of eloquence, is that expressed by Dr. Campbell in the first sentence of

his PHILOSOPHY OF RHETORIC: "Eloquence is  
 "that art or talent by which a discourse is adapted  
 "to its end." The same sentiment is intimated by  
 Quintilian, when he says, "*Quo quisque plus efficit*  
 "*dicendo, hoc magis secundum naturam eloquentiæ*  
 "*dicit \**" Fenelon, the best of all critics, in his  
 Dialogues of the Dead, represents Demosthenes as  
 saying to Cicero, "Tu faisais dire: Qu'il parle bien!  
 "et moi je faisais dire: Allons! marchons contre  
 "Philippe" "Whatever composition" says Mr.  
 Wilkes, in one of his speeches, "produces the effect  
 "which is intended, in the most forcible manner, is,  
 "in my opinion, the best, and most to be approved.  
 "That mode should always be pursued; it has the  
 "most merit, as well as the most success, on the  
 "great theatre of the world, no less than on the  
 "stage, whether you mean to inspire pity, terror, or  
 "any other passion" It may, perhaps, be objected,  
 that the word eloquence has generally been used in  
 a more limited sense and, to say the truth, it has by  
 many been applied to denote ornamental composition

\* Lib. XII. cap. 10.

only; but has not this arisen from a mistake, by which a part of the art has been taken for the whole? This has been the case with poetry, and it is amusing to observe the difficulties into which the error has brought many learned men, in their attempts to settle the nature and essential qualities of this noble art. Some have thought its nature to consist in imagery, some in imitation, some in fiction, some in metre, and others in passion; whereas these are only so many different means employed by the poet to effect his purposes, and are all merely parts of that of which it has been supposed they constitute the essence. However, let the common meaning of the term be what it may, we are not now considering the proper acceptation of a word, but the real nature of a serious art. The existence of such an art can hardly be doubted, for that would be to question whether men speak best by accident or by design, when they take no thought, or when they previously consider what they are about to do. Nature, it must be confessed, does much, and will not only lead but compel us, on interesting occasions, to use those forms of

speech (even the most complex) which rhetoricians have arranged and named. Perhaps no language is more *natural* than that which abounds with figure and allusion. There are more tropes uttered in Covent-garden on a market day, than in the House of Commons on a great debate. Yet still imagination alone is not sufficient, and a living man, of high rank in politics, might be pointed out, who, though gifted far beyond any of his contemporaries, and greatly superior to them in acquirements, has yet been often found a useless and sometimes a dangerous auxiliary, because he wanted the skill to manage his prodigious powers. He is ever saying something only for the sake of saying it, merely because it is singular, beautiful, or sublime, and without any regard to its effect on his auditors. A real thought he never can dismiss, till he has made it the subject of innumerable comparisons, or darkened it by superabundant illustration. If it be possible for such a waste of talents to be occasioned by such a deficiency in the art that we are speaking of, it may not be amiss to consider whether the definition of it given by Dr. Campbell



be the true one and, at the same time, to examine the opinions of the other celebrated writers, whose definitions I have quoted, as they are maintained and defended by two authors of great reputation, and of peculiar abilities for the discussion of such a subject, Dr. Browne and Dr. Leland, both of whom have stated their sentiments at length; the former in his *ESSAY ON RIDICULE*, and the latter in his *DISSERTATION ON THE PRINCIPLES OF HUMAN ELOQUENCE*.

Dr. Browne speaks thus: "As eloquence is of a  
 "vague, unsteady nature, merely relative to the im-  
 "aginations and passions of mankind; so there must  
 "be several orders and degrees of it, subordinate to  
 "each other in dignity, yet each perfect in its kind.  
 "The common *end* of each is persuasion: the means  
 "are different, according to the various capacities,  
 "fancies, and affections of those whom the artist  
 "attempts to persuade. The pathetic orator, who  
 "throws a congregation of enthusiasts into tears and  
 "groans, would raise affections of a very different  
 "nature, should he attempt to proselyte an English

“parliament. As, on the other hand, the finest  
 “speaker that ever commanded the house would in  
 “vain point the thunder of his eloquence on a  
 “Quaker meeting”—Essay on Ridicule, s. 3, p. 32.

Of this passage, Dr. Leland says, “This is plausible and ingeniously urged; but the whole argument  
 “is founded on the supposition that eloquence and  
 “persuasion are one and the same, and that to be  
 “denominated an orator, no more is necessary than  
 “to influence and move the hearer: a supposition  
 “which cannot be admitted, however witty men may  
 “have talked of the ‘eloquence of *silence*,’ or the  
 “‘eloquence of *nonsense*.’ ‘Persuadent enim dicendo,’ saith Quintilian; ‘vel ducunt in id quod  
 “volunt, alii quoque meretrices, adulatores, corruptores’ (Lib. II. cap. 16.) The alluring accents  
 “of an harlot move the sensualist; the abject and  
 “extravagant praises of a flatterer move the vain  
 “man; and the plain promise of a large reward,  
 “expressed without trope or figure, may have the  
 “greatest power over the conduct of a traitor or an  
 “assassin. But it will by no means follow that the

“ harlot, the flatterer, or the suborner is *eloquent*.  
 “ To merit this praise, a man must persuade (if he  
 “ does persuade) by the real excellences, the engaging  
 “ and conciliating qualities of speech. Accordingly,  
 “ Aristotle tells us it is the office of rhetoric, ‘ videre  
 “ ‘ quæcunque apposita sint ad persuadendum in  
 “ ‘ quaque re ’ So that the Doctor’s orator, who  
 “ throws a congregation of enthusiasts into tears and  
 “ groans, is, in reality, no orator at all, because he  
 “ owes his influence, not to clearness and strength  
 “ of reasoning, not to dignity of sentiment, force  
 “ or elegance of expression, and the like, but to  
 “ senseless exclamation, unmeaning rhapsody ; or to  
 “ grimace, to a sigh, to a rueful countenance ; and if  
 “ he would in vain endeavour to proselyte an English  
 “ parliament, it is for this very reason, because he is  
 “ no orator, nor can any man without any one of the  
 “ *apposita*, the rational excellences and engaging  
 “ qualities of speech, be said to possess a degree of  
 “ eloquence perfect in its kind ”—Leland’s Disser-  
 tation, ch. 14.

What Leland says of Browne’s may be as justly

said of his own argument, that it is plausibly and ingeniously urged; but probably the opinion of neither is true. Although it may be acknowledged that "eloquence is relative to the imagination and "passions of men," yet it does not therefore follow that it is of a "vague, unsteady nature." It might as justly be said, that the art of music is of a vague, unsteady nature, because it produces compositions so infinitely various; or that the art of the painter is liable to the same reflection, because it is sometimes exercised on copper, and sometimes on canvas. The arts themselves are steady and immutable; it is only the objects on which they operate that are various and perishable. Neither is it true that the *only end* of all eloquence is persuasion. An orator undoubtedly often aims to persuade, but he generally has some other end in view. He frequently wishes to alarm, to rouse, to depress, to excite our pity, or to fire our indignation, and sometimes he is only desirous to delight the imagination. Now these different objects can never be reduced under the general head of persuasion, without departing most unwarrantably from

the common acceptation of that term. The ingenious instances adduced in the last sentence of the quotation from Browne, are certainly not sufficient to prove either of his positions; namely, that eloquence is of a vague, unsteady nature, or that the common end of all eloquent discourses is persuasion. The answer just given to the principles themselves, will also destroy the application of these instances. And, in truth, the facts which he takes notice of may be accounted for in a much more reasonable and unobjectionable manner.

That the Methodist preacher would produce no other effect in parliament but that of making himself ridiculous, is unquestionable; and why? Because, in attempting to affect the house, by the use of the same means as those that are successful in his own pulpit, he would cease to be eloquent. He would be violating one of the fundamental rules of rhetoric, which teaches us, that a speaker ought to have a constant regard to the quality of his audience. His ill success, therefore, would be owing to his want of art. He would fail, because he was ineloquent.

The eloquence which he had displayed on his own ground would still remain unimpeachable.

The same reasoning is just as applicable to the parliamentary-speaker, who should point the thunder of his eloquence on a Quaker-meeting. The thundering sort of eloquence would here be misapplied; and how many soever he might use of those conciliating qualities of speech which Leland speaks of, he would still be unsuccessful, because his speech would not be *ad homines*. Dr. Leland's remarks are truly sensible, and would not be liable to objection, if altered but a little. The addition to be recommended is a short explanation of what he means by those rational and real excellences, those conciliating qualities of speech, which he repeats as the basis of his reasoning. Had he been called upon for such an explanation, he would, I am persuaded, have expressed himself so as to deviate materially from the truth of the case. He would probably have said, that nature had at first suggested certain forms of speech, which rhetoricians had arranged and settled, and that these he meant to describe by the terms

rational and real excellences, engaging and conciliating qualities. This others *have* said; and to such let it be answered, that perhaps the most common faults of all bad writing arise from this supposition, of something intrinsically excellent and eloquent in certain forms of speech, even when considered without any view to the effects which they are fitted to produce. Most writers, it must be confessed, employ tropes and figures because they *are* tropes and figures, and not because they are calculated to produce certain effects on the minds of their readers or hearers. The term conciliating is itself relative, and supposes somebody to be conciliated; and these conciliating qualities of speech must vary as much as the tempers and understandings of those who are to be conciliated. That which is a conciliatory quality in a Methodist congregation is not so in parliament, and that which is so in parliament is not so in a Quaker-meeting.

The grimaces and rueful exclamations, which Leland supposes are so effectual in a conventicle, are certainly more useful there than even his con-

ciliating qualities and rational excellences of speech : but it is also true, that exclamations more pathetic, and gestures more natural, would be still more effectual, even in an assembly of enthusiasts ; and the tears and groans produced by these grimaces only show the great advantage of appropriating and adapting both style and gesture, since he himself allows that these awkward attempts at adaptation have more effect than the most polite and splendid oration, if composed and delivered without any regard to the peculiarities of the audience. Yet although the variety of temper, intelligence, customs, opinions and prejudices, among mankind, is very great, there are at bottom certain leading principles, certain master-passions and prevailing tendencies, that all men have in common, which form the character of the species, and greatly overbalance all accidental and acquired differences. Variety of character is undoubtedly one of the characteristics of man, but similarity is a more important one. We all both resemble and differ from each other in countenance and form, as well as in the turn and quality of our minds. Just



so it is in the art of eloquence ; the kinds are as various as the kinds of men, and yet all arise from a few invariable principles ; and no other forms of speech can deserve the names which Leland has given to them, but such as are addressed to those qualities in human nature which every perfect individual of the species is found to possess. Such qualities there undoubtedly are and so far as we are all alike, so far are the rules of eloquence invariable, so far must a speaker's addresses to our understandings and tempers be in all cases the same. In what situation, or at what season, would it be wrong that the style should be suited to the subject, should be perspicuous in explanation, accurate in reasoning, decorated in giving delight, or animated in exciting passion ? That the opening of a speech should not betray insolence nor conceit ; that the narration should be clear ; that the arguments should be cogent ; that the arrangement should be advantageous ; that the pronunciation should be varied and distinct ? These are not the precepts of one age nor of one country ; they are as necessary to

be observed at this time, as they were when Aristotle or Quintilian first inculcated them.

Instead, therefore, of concluding with Dr. Browne, that eloquence is of a vague, unsteady nature, or with Leland, that the enthusiast would fail because he is no orator, let these inferences be drawn—that eloquence is fixed on unchangeable principles; that it is exceedingly extensive in its use, and relates to every kind of discourse or speech that can be imagined; that he who follows its precepts in one instance, is in that instance truly eloquent, however he may fail of success when attempting another kind of speaking, whether it be of a higher or lower degree; and, in short, let Dr. Campbell's definition be thought the true one, when he says, that “Eloquence is the art by which a discourse is adapted to its end” This definition solves all difficulties, explains, and, as it were, embodies all rules, and is the grand axiom by which the propriety of every subordinate rhetorical precept must finally be tried. If such conclusions can be satisfactorily drawn from the foregoing thoughts, the examination of the

subject has not been useless. For it is plainly of material consequence to be right in the first principles of a practical question, since real conduct in life and business cannot but be greatly affected by their truth or falsehood. He who thinks eloquence to be the art of deceiving, with Mr. Locke, will, if he be a good man, never study to be eloquent. He who thinks it is speaking ornamentally will be speaking ornamentally, when speaking plainly would be more efficacious. He will, most probably, be lavish of his tropes and figures, when these ambitious decorations should be shunned, or employed with the most sparing caution. He who thinks it consists in moving the passions, will often be weeping unaccompanied by the tears of his audience: and he who thinks it is the art of persuading, will not unfrequently be urgent when he ought to be instructive, or using vehement entreaties instead of powerful proofs. He, and he only, will not be cramped in the exercise of his art by the narrowness of his principles, who thinks it is the art of speaking and writing in such a manner as is most

likely to obtain the ends which he proposes to himself in speaking or writing. Does he address the multitude? He will aim at being intelligible, and impassioned. Does he speak before men of learning, and such as are eloquent themselves? He will endeavour to be rational and concise. Does he desire to convince? He will reason. Does he wish to give delight? He will be copious, flowing, rich in imagery, and elegant in expression: nothing will be harsh, nothing careless, nothing repulsive. Does he mean to agitate or persuade? He will be animated and earnest. He will arm himself with the thunders and lightnings of eloquence; or will speak in the mildest tone of insinuation, with "bated breath and whispering humbleness." In short, he will at all times accommodate himself to his situation; he will be

"Orpheus in silvis, inter delphinas Arion"

Like Sylla, he will convert the trees of the academy into martial engines.

Yet this is not all his praise, for it is not only

on public and solemn occasions that he will find opportunities to use his manifold skill\*; his eloquence is not only fitted for the bar, the pulpit, or the public assemblies of the state, but for the numberless interesting occurrences of private life, and may even descend to the telling of a story, the composition of a letter, or the dexterous management of common conversation. It is like the enchanter's tent, now hid in a nut-shell, now covering an army. To men who have lived in the world, and seen real affairs, the utility of such a varied, accommodating, and ready skill, cannot but be obviously apparent. It is thus spoken of by Lord Bacon, and is set down by him among the desiderata:—

“ Surely it will not be amiss to recommend this  
 “ whereof we now speak to a new inquiry, to call it  
 “ by name, The Wisdom of Private Speech, and to  
 “ refer it to deficiencies; a thing certainly which the  
 “ more seriously a man may think of, the more

\* Is orator erit, mea sententia, hoc tam gravè dignus nomine, qui *quæcumque res inciderit*, prudenter, et compositè, ornatè, et memoriter dicat.—Cic. de Or., Lib. I. sect. 15.

“highly he shall value \*” But, setting aside the evident advantages arising from a superior ability in delivering our sentiments on great occasions, and even omitting to lay any stress on the obvious utility of the same skill when exerted in a man’s private affairs, the pleasures that arise from fine writing are so great, so various, so often to be communicated, and so easy to be obtained, that this consideration alone would defend the art from the imputation of insignificance. For I can never be brought to believe that they are unprofitably employed, who are constantly increasing the daily pleasures of their fellow-creatures; who can contrive, without corrupting men’s minds, to exercise and delight them. Shall those be called unprofitable labours, which deliver thousands from their domestic anxieties; an artizan from his fatigue; a soldier from his sufferings; a statesmen from his cares; which enable one

\* Certè, non abs re fuerit, circa hoc ipsum, de quo nunc dicimus, novam instituere inquisitionem, eamque nomine Prudentiæ sermonis privati indigitare, atque inter desiderata reponere: rem certè, quam quo attentius quis recogitet, eo pluris faciet.—De Augm. Scient., Lib.VI. cap. 3.

man to forget his poverty, another his disease, a third his captivity, and all their misfortunes?

Who are these severe judges that are ever insisting upon the exclusive excellence of the mechanical, commercial, or even philosophical employments; as if those employments were good for any thing, considered separately from the end, which they aim at in common with works of imagination, **THE PROMOTION OF HAPPINESS?** Are there any of them that tend more immediately to this great purpose? Which of them has more power to refine the manners, to soften the temper, to diffuse tranquillity and cheerfulness, to correct and enlarge the mind? Away, then, with such short-sighted objections, and let those that chuse it prefer the man who makes a blade of grass grow where it grew not before, to the poet and the moralist who water the sickly seeds of virtue, and cause a rich harvest of good deeds to spring up from the unfriendly soil of a depraved or neglected heart.

TO MR. HORNE TOOKE..

21st October, 1792.

I HAVE again gone through the "ΕΠΕΑ ΠΤΕΡΟ-  
"ΕΝΤΑ " carefully, without once using an English-  
man's most valuable privilege, the right of skipping ;  
but I have read it a second time with much delight  
and more advantage.

I at first supposed it to be a mere grammar, and  
did not suspect its being (what it truly is) a  
treatise on logic and metaphysics ; yet I was already  
aware that languages are, really, analytic methods,  
and that, in learning the *accidence*, we are learning  
to combine, abstract, and generalise. Without  
mentioning algebra or fluxions, the well-known fact  
that the *blind* can reason well respecting forms and  
colours, is a proof that words and characters are the  
chief, though not the only instruments of ratioci-  
nation. In the simpler cases of common life, I



acknowledge the same to be true. Give any thing a name, and it is attended to, as when any peculiar tint has been christened, we learn to distinguish it, but not before.

It is scarcely possible to overrate either the hindrances arising from a clumsy and a confused notation, or the aid derived from one that is skilful and clear. LA PLACE says, that the invention of logarithms has, in effect, lengthened the lives of astronomers; and it was, long ago, observed that, “by an algebraical process, Mr. MACHIN has approximated the quadrature of the circle much more nearly than was practicable by the methods of the ancients; since the utmost length of man’s life would have been too short for the task” The improvement of science would have been much accelerated had the Greeks used the Arabic arithmetical signs, and it would also have been fortunate if the zero had been at 12 instead of 10.

Even in the shifting hues that play over the creations of wit and humour, the phraseology is a help to invention. Thus many have remarked,

that it is easier to be witty in French than in German\*,

Your etymological discoveries have dispelled many a thick cloud hanging over intellectual objects, and hiding them even from the piercing eyes of Mr. LOCKE. I well remember my own perplexity and discouragement when I read the following wordy and confused passages in his "Essay"

"Besides words, which are names of *Ideas*, there  
 "are a great many others that are made use of  
 "to signify the *connexion* that the mind gives to  
 "*Ideas, or Propositions, one with another.* The  
 "mind in communicating its thoughts to others,  
 "does not only need signs of the *Ideas* it has then  
 "before it, but others also, to show or intimate  
 "some particular action of its own, at that time,  
 "relating to those *Ideas* \* \* \* \*. He who would  
 "show the right use of Particles, and what force  
 "and significancy they have, must take a little

\* A most ingenious writer goes so far as to say of the Italian,  
 "C'est une langue qui va d'elle même, exprime sans qu'on s'en  
 "mêle, et paraît presque toujours avoir plus d'esprit que celui qui  
 "parle."—1834.

“ pains, enter into his own thoughts, and observe  
 “ nicely the several Postures of his mind in dis-  
 “ coursing \* \* \* \*. They are all *marks of some*  
 “ *action or intimation of the mind*: and therefore,  
 “ to understand them rightly, the several views,  
 “ postures, stands, turns, limitations, and excep-  
 “ tions, and several other thoughts of the mind,  
 “ for which we have either none, or very deficient  
 “ names, are diligently to be studied”

A greater philosopher still has said, “ Verba ves-  
 “ tigia mentis ” What, then, must be his deserts  
 who enables us to understand, and to employ them,  
 by giving, as it were, their whole biography?

There are, however, difficulties in abstruse inqui-  
 ries far beyond the reach of lexicons. The words  
 too, themselves, often come down to us from anti-  
 quity in a waving line, departing from the original  
 signification, so far as to be opposed to it. Your  
 admired DES BROSSES has a chapter full of such  
 examples, but I shall remind you only of one.

“ L'emploi que nous faisons de notre mot *quitte* a  
 “ tiré son origine d'un Latinisme assez connu. *J'en*

" *suis quitte*, c'est-à-dire, on ne m'en parlera plus ;  
 " je suis en repos là-dessus : *Quietus sum ab illa*  
 " *re*. Sur cette locution nous avons fait le verbe  
 " *quitter*, pour *abandonner*. De sorte que le mot  
 " *quitter* se trouve, dès la seconde génération, avoir  
 " quelquefois un sens tout contraire au primitif. Car  
 " lorsqu'on dit : *Je suis dans une grande inquietude*  
 " *depuis le moment où vous m'avez quitté*, n'est-ce  
 " pas comme si l'on disoit en Latin : *Valdè sum*  
 " *inquietus, ex qua die quietus sum à te* \*"?

Much depends on the feelings and habits of the  
 word-makers and word-users, as, perhaps, in the  
 language of post-horses, *humanity* may signify  
*cruelty*.

Now do not think your thankful pupil impudent  
 for confessing that you seem, occasionally, to place  
 too much confidence in etymology, when you are  
 analysing important terms in morals and metaphy-  
 sics. You must not suspect me of undervaluing the  
 truth of any individual derivation, or its logical  
 consequence. The more we read and reflect, the

\* " Mécanisme des Langues," Sect. 175.

more frequently do we discover that abstract disputes are commonly mere logomachies, wars of words, battles in the air between phantoms without souls or bodies. Words, therefore, must be examined as with a microscope.

Even though I have taken the trouble to write out these doubts, I should not have put the paper into this parcel, if I had not known that Cooper has already told you of our scepticism. Since he has turned king's evidence, he may be pardoned; but you can punish me, if you please, to-morrow, by sending me to the side-table. We shall go to Wimbledon together, and perhaps Rogers may accompany us. He is quite innocent at present, but, to own the truth, there is a conspiracy to treat you as the Prophet in Virgil was served by the boys and girl, in compelling you to talk philosophy, instead of politics—our motives are two. We think it will be to you a "douce violence," and we would much rather that you should philosophise, even at the cost of hearing our own notions refuted and laughed at.

## TO THE SAME.

*July, 1794. (Extract.)*

It has been objected by a fine writer to your prime favourite, Mr. Locke's important refutation of the doctrine of innate ideas, and to the well-known comparison of the intellect to a sheet of blank paper, that "on the paper may be written, sugar is bitter, "wormwood is sweet, gratitude is base, envy is "noble ; but no force nor fraud can ever print such "impressions on the mind. 'The human soul,' it is added, "has predetermined sentiments and tastes "springing from a source beyond experience, custom, "or choice "

Now, this objection, though it has a plausible appearance, is not an accurate statement of the fact. Authority, and even accident, *do* frequently inscribe false propositions on the minds both of young and old. The memory and the understanding are "*rasæ tabulæ*" for testimony and experience to write upon ;

though testimony and experience, it is true, are controuled by the natures of physical and of moral existence, by our senses and by our feelings of pain and pleasure : that is, by the very constitution both of the universe and of ourselves. It is indisputable that our senses do not usually write nonsense or falsehood on the memory; but it is equally true that, their evidence being mistaken, they do so occasionally, and nothing but patient, persevering analysis, can efface or correct the inscriptions. The difference between visible and tangible magnitude, and, to use more homely examples, the delusive perceptions of pain in an amputated limb, and the appearances on the banks of a river while we are sailing, "*terræque urbesque recedunt*" are decisive proofs of erroneous conclusions. Indeed it requires much caution to form right opinions, and, as Dr. Moore observes, "if ideas were innate, it would save much trouble to many worthy persons"

Leibnitz, after truly representing Locke's doctrine as an exemplification of the ancient maxim, "*Nihil est in intellectu quod non priùs fuerat in sensu*"

adds, "*nisi intellectus ipse*" and Mr. Dugald Stewart warmly praises the acuteness of this remark. But how can any man think highly of an axiom which has absurdity in its very expression? Only strike out the middle clause, and see what can be made of "*Nihil est in intellectu nisi intellectus ipse*" Why! the question itself in discussion is, "what are the laws of the intellect, and how do they originate?"

In replying to this inquiry we must, at present, mention instinct as well as perception, though, since the principle of association (that great sensitive and intellectual law!) has been carefully traced, the theory of instinct is daily becoming less and less necessary to account for the phenomena. Here lie (and but little below the surface) the seeds of a rich harvest for the sickle of future metaphysicians. Sensation and association will probably be found to account for nearly all the appearances. Thus, in Ethics, the existence of a moral sense cannot be doubted; but its instinctive, innate origin is, I suppose, given up by most philosophers, and habit, unavoidable habit, is admitted to be its source.



A stumble at the threshold, not unlike Leibnitz' false-step, occurs in the elementary dictum of some eminent modern materialists: "Movent sed non "promovent" Two great teachers in this school have defined an idea to be "a motion in the brain "perceived" Now, did any man ever perceive a motion in his brain? There may be, and there probably is a motion there, and it may be followed by perception; but who has ever perceived the motion, or detected the connection? Anatomists' and physiologists may do their utmost, but there will always remain an undiscovered something between the bodily organ and the percipient power.

In subjects of this kind (and indeed in all subjects) it is best to learn, as it were, the alphabet of the doctrine. Many a time something may be found in the first chapter of a book, rendering it needless to read on, and when it happens otherwise, still the benefit of examining first principles is great.

The ascent from the bottom of the hill may be fatiguing, but, when the summit is attained, what a prospect! What a distance between a minute

examination of the mere letters composing a word, and the sublime theory that may be disclosed in its import !

You must sometimes have been surprised by the length of your journeys.

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TO FRANCIS HORNER, ESQ.

*Fredley Farm, 18th June, 1805.*

I AM not surprised that you have reflected as you say, "again and again" on the subject of our singular conversation, although you still smile at our having fallen upon such a topic, in our long walk among the woods of NORBURY. No subject can well be more important and none is more perplexing—it is a sea almost without a shore.

In Turgot's article, "Existence," he hardly exaggerates, though he says, "Les degrés de probabilité dont une juste estime et une exacte mesure seroient le comble de la sagacité et de la prudence."

Hear Lucretius too :

“ Nam nihil *egregius* quàm res secernere apertas  
 “ A dubiis ”

And Cicero : “ Benè qui conjiciet vatem hunc per-  
 “ hibebo optimum ”

I agree with you, however, that a common opinion intimated by Gibbon, in the following passage, is not true.

“ I desisted from the pursuit of mathematics,  
 “ before my mind was hardened by the habit of rigid  
 “ demonstration, so destructive of the finer feelings  
 “ of moral evidence ; which determine the actions  
 “ and opinions of our lives ”

Are we not more benefited by the habits of close attention formed in the study of mathematics, than injured by the hardening process which he dreaded ? Surely the necessity of walking all our lives in the twilight of probable evidence, corrects the searing influence of our seeing occasionally by the blaze of a noonday sun.

It is remarkable, that the rules of probability have always been spoken of as important desiderata and

that several of the greatest authors have declared their intention to treat of them at length ; but, somehow or other, they have always put off the task to another day. Leibnitz even tells Thomas Burnet in a letter, “ Si Dieu me donne encore de la vie et de la santé, j'en ferai ma *principale* affaire ”

It has often struck me, that this never-failing postponement of the arduous undertaking cannot have arisen from a want of courage or of industry ; but that it proves only a secret suspicion of the truth, that a complete, or even a very useful enumeration of such rules, is impracticable.

Fortunately, the habits always generated by an irresistible association of ideas and motives well supply the deficiency. Only consider the vast multitude, and the complication of facts to be dealt with, their infinite degrees and shades, and the incalculable consequences of the slightest error in the data. A single leaf close to the eye may hide a mountain.

As you have mislaid our short account of those who have written on this peculiar subject, I shall

copy, on the other side, my own imperfect list. What great names ! What unperformed promises !

Being a professional man, you needed not to be reminded of GILBERT and PHILLIPS. They are, perhaps, the best guides, since, in law, there are adjudicated principles, founded on the learning and experience of the subtlest and most pains-taking of men.

The nature of the evidence to be looked for in any particular inquiry, has been often and well considered ; and herein our great master, Dr. Butler, has shown his usual superiority.

Among the humbler hills of Cumberland, I shall envy you the sight of the sublimer mountains in your native country : yet, I shall grudge you much more the opportunity of discussing these things with Mr. Dugald Stewart, either at Kinneil or in Edinburgh. With us, metaphysics are out of fashion and I hardly know any man, but our friend Mackintosh, who cultivates this science. He, alas ! is gone to another hemisphere ; and, in his last letter, he talks of forsaking psychology for history.

## THE LIST.

Aristotle ; especially Topic, ch. 14, and Ethic. ad Nicom., Lib. I. ch. 1.

Gassendi, Locke, and Leibnitz, passim.

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Gravesande ; " Introductio ad Philosophiam—" Leyden, 1737. The chapters on simple and complex probability : the whole book on the origin of errors : the chapter on analysis and synthesis, and other parts relative to dexterity in practice.

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Butler's Analogy.

Borlæus, " De Lege Probabilitatis "

Bernouilli, " Ars Conjectandi "

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" à la Probabilité des Decisions rendues à la Pluralité  
" des Voix "—Paris, 1785.

Thorshmid, "*Historia Probabilitatis Antiquissima*"  
—1749.

Garve, "*De nonnullis quæ pertinent ad Logicam*"  
"*Probabilitatis*"—Halle, 1776.

The concluding part of Freret's "*Essay on the*"  
"*Evidence of History*" in the *Mémoires de l'Académie*.—Vol. VIII. 12mo edition.

Helvetius, "*De l'Homme*"—Sect. 2, Note 40,  
Ch. 15, Sect. 9.

Helvetius, "*De l'Esprit*"—Tom. I., page 7.

Mendelsohn, as quoted by Pistorius in his *Notes*  
on Hartley.

Robins's Answer to Berkeley's "*Analyst*"

The latter part of the "*Report to the house of*"  
"*Commons on the Proceedings in Hastings's Trial,*"  
"*1794*"—By Mr. Burke.—Page 41, &c.

TO THE SAME.

*Fredley Farm, July 1, 1805.*

You think that I expressed myself too unguardedly in my last letter, when I said that a very useful enumeration of rules is impracticable. Perhaps I did so.

It is true, also, that the great law of thought, the association of ideas and feelings in daily life, is too vague in its results to be relied upon in abstruse reasoning. The difference between them I own to be both unquestionable and important. In a scientific experiment, we must measure heat by a thermometer and not by the hand, though we need not ask the instrument whether we should put on an additional waistcoat.

The necessity for instant decision in life, renders it often prudent to take the chance of being right or wrong, without waiting to balance reasons very nicely. In such cases, and sometimes even in speculation,



this kind of credulity is more philosophical than scepticism ; though authority in abstruse investigations should usually do little more than excite attention, while in practice it must guide our conduct. We trust to the mile-stones in a journey to York, and do not wait for a trigonometrical survey before we set out. In our daily affairs, we luckily do not act on a mathematical estimate of probabilities. Who, for instance, would be perfectly at ease, were his life depending on a lottery of 5,000 tickets, though there were but one fatal blank in the wheel ? Yet what is our chance of living out the week ? Molière's well-known couplet ridicules this misapplication of philosophical arguings :

" Raisonner est l'emploi de toute ma maison,  
Et le raisonnement en bannit la raison "

In experiments and in abstract pursuits, we cannot, often, be too hesitating and distrustful. Are those scales bad ones that weigh to a scruple ? You will pardon the double meaning. Yet, sometimes, even in such inquiries, while truth lies on the surface, we

dig and dig, only to turn up errors ; almost as ridiculously as the monkey's carefully examining the back of a looking-glass to find out the image.

The mental habits formed in the streets and in the study are more than different ; they are sometimes at variance with each other ; and superiority in science, as you well remember, does not always imply the soundest judgment in morals or in religion. Pascal, a great mathematician and an exquisite controversialist, believed that miracles were performed by a holy pickle, and wore under his shirt an unintelligible amulet.

How to measure precisely the danger of believing too readily or too reluctantly I do not know ; and, though you are right in thinking that it would be advantageous to study the maxims of evidence, yet you are quite wrong in supposing that I can suggest a single one that is either new or incontrovertible.

The difficulties are many and one springs up at the very outset ; for the probability itself of a fact, by pre-possessing the mind, may prevent due examination, and become a reason for distrusting the

general belief. Then, as we go on, argument confutes argument, fact opposes fact, testimony contradicts testimony—one man doubts the Bible, another believes the Gazette. A person thinks he has a pain in his arm after it has been cut off. Cross the fingers, and one pebble feels like two. Do we not most plainly *see* the sun moving along the heavens? But these are old remarks, and they do not justify scepticism; they only call for caution.

Do what we will, we must philosophise, well or ill, and the minds of the ignorant swarm with insect-hypotheses; they see few differences and no difficulties, and for ever generalise too soon and too much. Objects at a distance, or seen by a mere glance, are much alike, and all colours are the same to those that are in the dark. Lessing has declared, that if the Almighty had offered truth in one hand and the art of searching for it in the other, he would have taken the latter. This is pretty strong and very different is the fashionable creed in our time; though it is confessed by some, that metaphysics are good preparatory studies, as some green crops may

be profitably raised, if to be ploughed into the land intended to bear more useful grain. It is allowed, too, that they may invigorate the faculties, as archers strengthen their arms by shooting into the air.

I think I see you smiling at this long postscript to my last letter (for it is no more) as a new (I wish I could say an amusing) instance of the inutility of such pursuits, ending, after many turnings and windings, just where they began. You look a little giddy just now, after this intellectual waltz, this jaunt in a round-about; "*vacuum per inane volutus*". Take down directly one of your law-books, read but two pages, and the walls of your chambers will again stand still.

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TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

*January 8, 1830.*

Your friend must have been in a very good humour, when he spoke so civilly of my hasty plan for the study of that much ridiculed science, meta-

physics, and you must have been more than reasonably humble; when, being so much better informed than I am, you could have any wish to ask my feeble help in directing your young and eager correspondent. Why! you surely have forgotten that I do not read the German writers, whom you have, of late, esteemed somewhat more highly than you formerly did. Perhaps you are too busy to spare the time for such a sketch, and any desire of yours is sufficient to overcome even my reluctance to appear as teaching him from whom I am accustomed to learn. I thought you justly blamed Mr. Dugald Stewart the other day, for having spoken so decidedly of the German philosophy, without having the means of examining the books of its original inventors; yet, pardon me, I must, though with real diffidence, own, that so far as I am enabled, by the French and English expositors, to comprehend their doctrines, they seem to be chiefly ancient errors newly christened, and made formidable by the disguise of a systematic and mysterious nomenclature—an old play with new dresses and decorations. The cob-

webs appear to be spun with scientific formality, and with some elegance. Of course, those learned persons, who have taken the trouble to learn the new language, will say, that "the grapes are sour" I hope they have found them sweet and nutritive. In our English gardens they do not ripen. Now, then, you will acknowledge that I am a blind guide, and not fit to be trusted. Give this caution to the young student; but here, notwithstanding, is the List that you request, and you will see that I by no means advise an inquirer to read in a chronological order.

Perhaps the following is a convenient arrangement of the works to be studied.

Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding"

The first book of his "Essay"

Duncan's "Logic" not as a Logic, but as a clear and elegant exposition of Locke's elementary opinions.

Hobbes's "Treatise on Human Nature"

The first nine chapters of the "Leviathan"

Hobbes's "Treatise on Liberty and Necessity"

Hobbes's "Computatio" in his Latin works, which are not in the folio edition.

Locke, as you know, has borrowed from Gassendi and from Hobbes, though he prudently did not venture to quote the latter, foreseeing that he should call up a host of implacable and powerful enemies.

HARTLEY'S "Theory" paying no attention to his hypothesis of vibrations.

Condillac "Logique" and "Essai sur l'Origine de nos Connoissances"

N. B.—I have a manuscript of Hartley's Theory, dated many years before Condillac had published.

Bonnet—"Psychologie" and his "Essai Analytique" are good, but they may be deferred or omitted.

The remainder of Locke's "Essay"

Collins on "Liberty and Necessity"

Dr. Clark's metaphysical works.

Reid's "Enquiry" His larger work may be looked at cursorily.

All Dugald Stewart's works—for, though he is

sometimes wrong in his elementary principles, he is always an instructive, elegant, and encouraging writer.

Berkeley's "Theory of Vision" which, I know, you justly consider as an inestimable contribution to the science.

Whateley's "Logic"

By this time, Aristotle must be consulted. The indexes will facilitate the search; and if the tyro is not a thorough hellenist let him get help from the best translators, or rather the paraphrasers and commentators on the "Ethics" "Politics" and "Analytics"

Cudworth's "Immutable Morality"

Butler's "Analogy" and all his "Sermons"

Cooper's "Essay on Moral Obligation"

Shaftesbury's "Inquiry concerning Virtue"

Hume's "Inquiry into the Principles of Morals"

Dr. Johnson's "Review of Soame Jenyns"

Bentham's "Essay on Legislation" How remarkable that he should consider Hume as the original author of his ethical system!

Mackintosh's Dissertation—to be read with care.



Dr. Brown's "Lectures" The ethical lectures seem to me inferior to the metaphysical, being not only wordy, but erroneous in the fundamental principle.

He has misconceived Hartley's and Hume's opinions; yet, the earliest parts of the work are of much value; especially his account of the origin of our notion of extension and external existence. This excepted, it appears to me that even his best passages are chiefly commentaries on Hartley's thoughts, though he does not seem to have read him carefully. Brown is also too declamatory and too full of repetitions.

#### Mill's "Analysis of the Human Mind"

The writers here recommended often differ from each other; but it frequently happens that, to understand an author, it is necessary to look at his predecessors and his antagonists. In most speculations, prevalent opinions are either disputed or defended. This should never be forgotten.

I am aware that this is the road-book of a long journey; but, I believe that, in such subjects, "the farthest way about is the nearest way home." I

remember Mr. Horne Tooke's saying of intellectual philosophy, that he had become better acquainted with the country through having had the good luck, sometimes, to lose his way—"Si non errâset fecerat  
"ille minùs"

To you, it is altogether needless to add one word as to the probable advantages of such a laborious pursuit of first principles, being so well aware, as you are, that to begin at the beginning in the sciences, as well as in matters of fact, is the nearest and safest road to the end. Even sensible men are too commonly satisfied with tracing their thoughts a little way backwards, and they are, of course, soon perplexed by a profounder adversary. In this respect, most people's minds are too like a child's garden, where the flowers are planted without their roots. It may be said of morals and of literature, as truly as of sculpture and painting, that to understand the outside of human nature, we should be well acquainted with the inside, and you can handle the anatomist's knife, as well as the artist's pencil.

TO SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

*January 30, 1831.*

As your Dissertation must, undoubtedly, be published separately, I hope it will be done without delay, and I am anxious that you should render it complete. This will cost you but little trouble and will require but a short addition.

I have now read it attentively for the second time, and I feel it to be merely justice to say, that I think it by far the most profound and convincing work on Ethics that I have ever met with. In saying so much, I am aware that I am giving it no less than the praise of being the best book on the best subject in all philosophy. Are you content?

At the same time, let me own, that I think its value would be greatly increased by a short statement of your own view of MORAL OBLIGATION. This will be little more than an abridgement of scattered passages in your Dissertation. Were it

otherwise, I should be disinclined to withdraw your attention from more pressing and, I fear, more engaging pursuits.

So much of our happiness inevitably depends on the conduct of others, that it has been a serious inquiry, in all times, by what rules we should be guided in our mutual intercourse. Indeed, to man only it belongs to know what *should be* as well as *what is*.

Few differences of opinion have existed respecting these rules, and none but such as can easily be reconciled, or accounted for ; but, far otherwise is the case when it has been asked, "What is a good action ?" "Why *ought* we to seek the well-being "of others as well as of ourselves ?"

The answers given you are well acquainted with, and they have been enumerated by writers of great learning and of much acuteness. To you, therefore, I shall only say, that it appears to me indisputable that *benevolent intention and beneficial tendency must combine to constitute the moral goodness of an action*. To do as much good, and as little evil as we

can, is the brief and intelligible principle that comprehends all subordinate maxims. Both good tendency and good will are indispensable ; for conscience may be erroneous as well as callous, may blunder as well as sleep. Perhaps, a man cannot be thoroughly mischievous unless he is honest.

In truth, practice is also necessary, since it is one thing to see that a line is crooked, and another thing to be able to draw a straight one. It is not quite so easy to do good as those may imagine who never try.

Neither can it be disputed, I think, that our understanding, our reason (call it which you will) must be judge, in the last resort, of every moral quality, be that whatever it may be, which urges us to act, to approve, or to condemn. Yet, fortunately, we have not been left entirely, nor chiefly, to the cold decisions of our intellect. Far readier and stronger motives push us on, than the tardy results of rational calculation. Yes! feelings have ever blended with convictions in forming our habits—habits, beside which, nothing is a sufficiently prompt and effectual cause of action in human nature.

Virtue thus soon becomes perfectly disinterested—soon so much a feeling as scarcely to seem also a principle : nor is the hypothesis of what is called the moral sense necessary ; if, by that term, be meant any faculty innate and instinctive. Once formed, the composition is indissoluble ; the current is one, though fed by a thousand springs.

I am fully sensible, too, that the end sought for is seldom or never the immediate stimulus to action.

Now, in what manner habits spring up and grow is no secret to you, nor to any person acquainted with that law of our nature which is called Association by Hartley, Suggestion by Brown, and Sequence by Mill. The first has traced them to their sources.

With you, I regret that no term, yet employed, indicates the singleness of the compound, when once the ingredients have been blended.

Thus far, probably, no real difficulty occurs ; but where is to be found a short, clear, and satisfactory explanation of the obligatoriness of moral conduct ? Certainly not in Paley. Yet it must ever have been unspeakably desirable to ascertain what is meant by

such words as *ought*, *should*, *duty*, *merit*, *demerit*. In every language there are corresponding terms, but it will be enough to analyse them in our own.

I conjecture that this deficiency has arisen from the inadequacy of a definition to explain the force of words that have been gathering associations from the beginning of life, from the cradle to the grave.

The origin of a word seldom accounts for the modern meaning ; yet, in these enquiries, it is often useful to ask the first question of etymology.

It seems as if the notion of DEBT were always visible in these terms ; and, if so, they are plainly instances of a common figure of speech employing the name of a striking part to designate the whole. But I am venturing beyond my purpose, and on such a theme, "*Satiùs est silere quam parùm dicere.*"

# VERSES.



FOURTH EDITION.

“ Neque si quis scribat, UTI NOS,  
“ Sermoni propiora, putes hunc esse poetam.”—  
HORAT. SAT. IV. Lib. 1.





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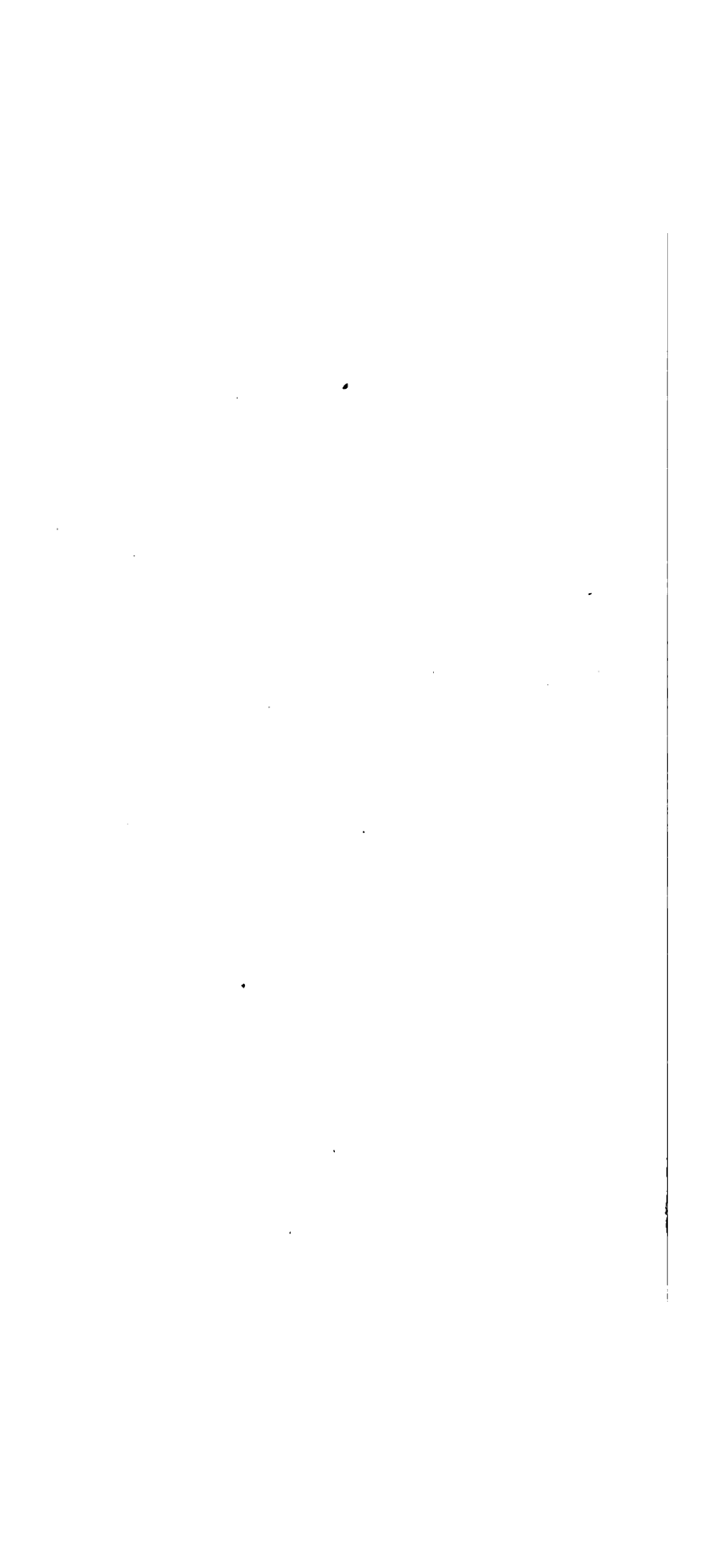
### EPISTLE

- I.—TO AN EMINENT POET.
- II.—TO A LADY WITH THE PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE.
- III.—TO A FRIEND ON MARRIAGE.
- IV.—FROM THE ALPS.
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AN EPITAPH.

THE ROSE.

TRUE PHILOSOPHY.



## I.—EPISTLE TO AN EMINENT POET.

"Hic error tamen, et levis hæc insania quantas  
 "Virtutes habeat."—HOR. Epis. I., Lib. 2.

WRITTEN IN 1792.

YES ! thou hast chosen well "the better part,"  
 And for the triumphs of the noblest art,  
 Hast, wisely scorn'd the sordid cares of life ;  
 Its gaudy joys, and its ambitious strife.

Less fitted for the many, than the few  
 That love the Beautiful and seek the True,  
 Too proud to pay his honour for his fame,  
 To wish a statesman's, or a conqueror's name,  
 The Poet shuns the Senate, and the Field ;  
 Known in his verse, but in his life conceal'd :  
 As some unheeded flower, that loves the shade,  
 Is by the fragrance of its leaf betray'd.

Far from the world's broad glare, the din of men,  
He seeks the pathless wood, the twilight glen,  
The silent mountain, the deserted stream,  
Unseen, unheard, to woo the waking dream :  
Now from the hanging rock and foaming shore,  
Raves to the deaf sea, while its waters roar ;  
Or musing sits, while airy voices call,  
Whole summer-days beside the torrent-fall.  
O'er the wild heath, alone, at eve he strays ;  
To catch with lingering look the sun's last rays ;  
Or watch the prying moon-beam, as it roves  
Through towers forsaken long, and haunted groves ;  
And, as each gleam some phantom-form reveals,  
A credulous awe, till then unknown, he feels.  
But oft, when Fancy wakes her shadowy broods,  
On his shut sense no sight, no sound, intrudes,  
To break the spells that bid her visions play  
In hues far brighter than belong to day.  
Then from his lips burst forth the unbidden strains ;  
In that wild hour when reason scarcely reigns.

Now in the closet's stillness, through the night,  
He watches by the taper's trembling light,

The deep recesses of his mind explores,  
 Wakes every sleeping thought in memory's stores,  
 With eager joy each dawning hint pursues,  
 Yet courts in vain the coy, capricious Muse :  
 For still he finds his struggling powers too weak  
 The dazzling vision, swelling theme to speak.  
 The tuneless sounds, the sullied speech of earth  
 Refuse to give his revelations birth :  
 Still the dark phrase, th' unmarshalled thoughts  
     confess

His shame, his glory, rapture and distress,  
 Mute till the Muse her aid propitious brings,  
 \* And heav'nly themes in heav'n's own accents sings.

High o'er the earth's revolving Poles he soars,  
 Scorning her trodden paths, her fathom'd shores,  
 With dauntless hand the gates of heav'n unfolds,  
 And all its glories, unrebuk'd, beholds !  
 Or, darting downward, with presumptuous flight,  
 Explores the realms of everlasting night ;

\* Poesis . . . . . etiam ad animi magnitudinem et ad  
 mores conferat—Et meritò divinitatis cujuspian particeps  
 videri possit. BACON, De Augm. Scient., Cap. XIII. Lib: 2.

Or calls to life creations all his own,  
 Where brighter suns, and sweeter shades are known,  
 And fairer forms still charm the unsated eye,  
 Than here just bloom to fade, just breathe to die.  
 No vapours rise as the fair Morn awakes,  
 But, all unveil'd, light from her beauty breaks :  
 On fragrant wing unwearied zephyrs play,  
 Murmur sweet music, and abate the day ;  
 In clouds of gold the lingering evenings close,  
 And every night the moon's mild lustre glows ;  
 O'er gold and gems the living waters flow ;  
 Flowers of all hues, all scents, uncultur'd, blow ;  
 Rich harvests (*here* the slow reward of toil)  
 Bend the wild bough, and crown the untroubled soil ;  
 On every breeze soft notes of rapture swell  
 From echoing rock, green hill, or bowery dell ;  
 And through the year (one bright unchanging Spring)  
 The coy, night-warbling bird delights to sing.  
 No hawk pursues the minstrels of the air,  
 Nor shuns the kid the lion's bloodless lair ;  
 And none harm man, nor are of man the prey,  
 And friendship fears no change, love no decay :

No pleasures pall, no cares, no pains annoy,  
To ask is to obtain, to wish is to enjoy.

Scenes that recal the visions of that world  
Whence man's rebellious Spirit erst was hurl'd,  
The fading memory, fainting hopes restore  
Of all he held, of all he was before.

Yet were this all his boast, how poor the praise !  
He proudly seeks man's abject thoughts to raise,  
Wakes all our hopes of glory, fears of shame,  
Incites to merit, and rewards with fame.

Heroes and kings their names, their forms, may  
trust

To the grav'd medal, or the mimic bust,  
Their deeds consign to Painting's glowing hand,  
Raise pillars to the sky, and bid them stand :  
In vain !—the aspiring column prostrate falls,  
The colours vanish from the faithless walls ;  
Soon the dim coin shall mock the poring eye ;  
Born of the rock the breathing statue die.  
Like man his proudest works to dust return :  
See ! through the shattered tomb the mould'ring urn !



Temple and Tower shall strew the encumber'd plain :  
 Of mightiest empires not a trace remain ;  
 But verse ! immortal, ever in its prime,  
 Defies decay, and triumphs over Time !

Inspir'd, not taught, the bard's exalted art,  
 In sacred trust, to few the heavens impart :  
 A new, a nobler sense in man to wake,  
 From all his instincts all that's earthly take,  
 O'er Nature's works a nameless charm to throw ;  
 On life a grace, a glory to bestow ;  
 Its duties dignify, its joys enhance,  
 And lend to truth the interest of romance ;  
 To teach content, yet bid our hopes aspire,  
 Endear this world, and fit us for a higher.

Proud of his high commission he disdains  
 To charm by vulgar, or unhallowed strains ;  
 Yet stoops to guide the heedless steps of youth,  
 And leads through fiction's flowery path to truth :  
 With pious fraud seduces man from ill,  
 And courts his fancy to controul his will.

Sweet though his numbers as the murmuring stream,  
 And bright each image as the morning beam,

Though the wit sparkle, though the passion flame,  
 And Fashion dictate to obedient Fame,  
 Yet—if the theme be trivial or impure,  
 The verse is mortal :—it shall not endure.  
 Virtue's the vital spark, the deathless soul,  
 That must pervade, and animate the whole.  
 He from the altar borrows all his fires,  
 And consecrates to heav'n what heav'n inspires.

Oh haste ! the laurel twine, the statue raise,  
 Vast the desert, and equal be the praise !  
 Lo ! Plenty at his feet her tribute flings !  
 His rank with Princes, and his seat with Kings !  
 Ah no !—in penury, perhaps in shame,  
 He lives, whom, lost, contending nations claim ;  
 Lives—not dismayed, nor murmuring at his lot,  
 Content though poor, not humbled though forgot.  
 He can at once foresee, and brave his doom,  
 Sure that the Palm shall flourish o'er his tomb ;  
 With good for ill a thankless world repays,  
 And proud to have serv'd mankind foregoes its praise.

How different is thy fate, accomplished friend !  
 Whom still the most commended most commend :

Thine all the honours of a well-earn'd name,  
Secure of present as of future fame ;  
Thine fortune's favours too, and thine the art  
(So rarely learnt !) to use them, and to impart.

Thus gifted, thus encouraged, be it thine  
To lift thy light on high, and bid it shine,  
A star ! to guide the wanderer as he strays  
O'er life's dark ocean, and its trackless ways :  
Thy course, so well begun, pursuing still,  
Obey thy call ; thy destiny fulfil ;  
And pour out all the treasures of thy mind,  
Bestow'd on thee, in trust for all mankind.

II.—EPISTLE TO A LADY, WITH  
SHAKESPEARE'S PLAYS.

"Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,  
"Pleniùs, ac meliùs Chrysippo et Crantore dicit."—

HOR. Epis. II. Lib. 1.

WRITTEN IN 1788.

AN ! though invited by the Spring and Thee,  
In vain I sigh, and struggle to get free ;  
'Mid smoke and noise, repining, I must stay,  
And leave untasted all the sweets of May ;  
To waste in stifling crowds the fragrant hours,  
And lose the year's first shoots, and earliest flowers.

For now the tardy white-thorn blows, and now  
The blossom hangs on every orchard-bough :  
Earth seems new-born, each blade and leaflet teems  
With murmurs of delight, and golden gleams,

As waking myriads swarm below, above,  
 And the dead quicken, and the living love.  
 And now each morn what clouds of incense rise !  
 What hymns of rapture ! grateful to the skies !  
 While all night long a sweet sad voice is heard,  
 The soothing vespers of the wakeful bird.  
 Man too reviving his glad tribute pays :  
 (Most cause has he for thankfulness and praise)  
 Each vernal scene to his prophetic eye  
 More dear, as harbinger of Summer nigh,  
 Soon to expand her warm maternal wing,  
 And nurse the tender infants of the Spring :  
 So shall the earth her countless broods sustain,  
 And of her millions none be born in vain.

Yet must I stay, though bidden to attend  
 The blissful rite that gives thee to my friend,  
 And at the altar hear thy trembling voice,  
 And see thy blushes, own thy maiden-choice.  
 Though absent present, I unite my prayer,  
 (Needless if love excluded every care)  
 That Fate, befriending virtue, may bestow  
 More than ye hope, and all ye wish below.

Source of my friend's best joys, who still shall find,  
 When thy cheek fades, fresh beauties in thy mind,  
 Sweet Soother of those ills that all must share,  
 And he must learn, tho' blest with thee, to bear,  
 Could Love alone life's few short hours employ,  
 Bidding Time borrow swifter wings from Joy,  
 Sages had taught, and Poets sung, in vain,  
 All art were folly, and all science pain—  
 But oh ! ye days when beauty's soft controul  
 First woke the slumbering instincts of the soul,  
 Sudden and swift when Love's resistless flame  
 Flash'd through each kindling atom of our frame,  
 When the gay visions of its infant hours,  
 And all its first fine ecstasies were ours,  
 Too soon your value from your loss we learn !  
 Too soon ye fly ! ah ! never to return !  
 Some busy fiend of Folly's envious broods  
 In our defenceless paradise intrudes,  
 And lures from peace and joy to grief and shame,  
 Whispering vain hopes of pleasure, power, or fame.  
 Exiled these blissful bowers, before our eyes  
 A bleak wide world in cheerless prospect lies,

Where some must force, by unrelenting toil,  
 Their scanty comforts from a stubborn soil,  
 While others sigh, amid their stores to find  
 No cure for care, no medicine for the mind,  
 To still the pang that conscience can impart,  
 And calm the restless pulses of the heart,  
 Throbbing as burns ambition's feverish fire,  
 Faltering with grief, or fluttering with desire.  
 Still must we bear, though shunning public strife,  
 The small hostilities of private life,  
 Those nameless, countless evils that infest  
 All, all that breathe, the happiest and the best.

Even Love from every ill is not secure,  
 But has its hours of absence to endure.  
 These hours to cheat, and speed the sluggish day,  
 What spell so witching as the poet's Lay ?

He from its cares the enraptur'd soul can steal,  
 While busied fancy quite forgets to feel ;  
 Tranc'd in the day-dreams of the fabling Muse,  
 The dull realities of life we lose ;  
 The senses sleep ; truth yields to fiction's power ;  
 A transient frenzy fills the ecstatic hour.

But this the humblest triumph of his art ;  
 Which soothes to soften, melts to mould the heart ;  
 Calls forth new powers, with loftier passions fires,  
 And generous thoughts, and glorious deeds inspires.

Not thus the world's contagious school, for thence  
 The head buys knowledge at the heart's expense :

An after-wisdom, ever learnt too late  
 To save from error, or its ills abate ;

A purblind prudence, missing still its aim,  
 Almost a vice, though with a virtue's name ;  
 Knowledge of evil, hurtful, humbling truth !  
 That, while it teaches, taints the thoughts of youth,  
 Its cheerful faith with dreary doubts annoys,  
 Daunts its brave hopes, and blights its opening joys.

Vice is not safely seen, though seen forewarn'd,  
 Better unknown, than known but to be scorn'd :  
 More wise in happy ignorance to remain,  
 Than in the tranquil bosom nurse Disdain,  
 And Hate, and Terror, passions all unblest,  
 Unmeet to fill the sanctuary of the breast,



Fear is low born, but Hope of high descent,  
Allied at once to Virtue and Content.

Ah ! if we see no smiles in Nature's face,  
Her gifts lose half their value, all their grace;  
Trembling we take them, and with thankless mind,  
(Deaf to the harmony, the beauty blind,)  
Too oft revile the bounteous, blissful plan,  
And its great Author, in his image, Man.

Then be the Muse thy teacher, and thy guide,  
Nor heed the bigot's fear, the sage's pride,  
\* In SHAKESPEARE'S Scenes, the unsullied mind  
may see,

Safe from its harms, the world's epitome ;  
May learn to fill its duties, meet its cares,  
Enjoy its blessings, and escape its snares.

In life's gay glare, as in the solar blaze,  
Confused and lost each mingling colour plays ;  
Opprest, the baffled eyeball turns away,  
Nor can discern the tints that form the day :

\* He that has read Shakespeare with attention, will  
perhaps find little new in the crowded world.—JOHNSON.

His page prismatic breaks the dazzling mass,  
And bids the blended hues distinctly pass.

No dead remains of ancient art he knew,  
But from the life man's naked nature drew :  
The changeful features of the soul pourtray'd,  
And caught each latent muscle as it play'd.  
The bold but faithful sketch shall live, and last  
Till the decaying world itself be past.

He the dim glass of learning could despise,  
And look through nature with unaided eyes.  
The sun of genius, with resistless ray,  
On all her dark recesses pours the day.  
He sees, exposed to his presumptuous glance,  
The magic cavern, and the fairy-dance ;  
Dares the dread secrets of the grave to trace,  
And view its awful wonders face to face ;  
The sullen spectres at his will employs,  
The murderer's couch to haunt, to blast his festal joys.

But themes like these to loftier strains belong,  
And the Bride trembles at the lengthening song.

For now, in fair perspective, rise to view,  
All the heart sigh'd for, all the fancy drew

In those gay hours when love *was* life's employ,  
And Hope was young, and credulous of joy.  
Oh ! may she find each flattering promise truth,  
And Time fulfil the prophecies of Youth.  
But, should Fate frown, may virtue's cheerful ray,  
More bright than suns, illumine life's cloudy day,  
Dispel the shades that o'er its evening rise,  
And light her footsteps to the expecting skies.

## POSTSCRIPT.

1804.

THUS, long long since, my verse prophetic flow'd,  
 But Fate has more than I foretold; bestow'd :  
 Still blest and blessing, each succeeding year  
 Has found thee happier, lovelier, and more dear.

Yes! there are charms that scorn the spoiler  
 Time,

More than predicted by my timorous rhyme ;  
 Then the gay bride—the wife, the mother now,  
 A graver beauty decks thy matron brow.  
 Years while they stole have giv'n grace for grace.  
 Thy virtues are recorded in thy face :  
 A thousand tender thoughts have gather'd there.  
 More likeness to thy heart thy features bear.  
 More of his virtues too, who still is thine,  
 Smile in thy looks, and through thy manners shine.

Of those we love unconsciously we learn ;  
We think their thoughts, and with their passions burn,  
Breathe the same accents, the same idiom speak ;  
Strong in their strength—but in their weakness weak.

How grateful then art thou, to him allied,  
Whose merits were thy choice, and are thy pride !

So shall ye both (long hence) survive in one,  
Both still be lov'd and honour'd in your son :  
Not o'er his form alone your semblance play,  
His mind your blended influence shall betray :  
The mother's softness, and the father's fire,  
In one harmonious character conspire :  
With feeling spirit, modesty with worth,  
Shall be the proofs, and blessings of his birth.

## III.—EPISTLE TO A FRIEND ON MARRIAGE.

“Poor moralist! and what art Thou?”—GRAY.

WRITTEN IN 1790.

HERE, where his rapid flood the TAMAR leads  
Through desert cliffs, wild woods, and pathless meads,  
Or where, in conflict with the lessening shores,  
Up the sweet inland-vale the ATLANTIC pours,  
While with the thrush the seamew blends her notes,  
Or on the rocking surge in slumber floats,  
And oft the ploughman stays his team to mark  
The drooping flag of many a captured bark  
Following the conqueror's course, as on he rides,  
And stems, with foaming prow, the murmuring tides,  
Here, once again I bid the world adieu,  
And my heart turns to friendship and to you.

Friend of my youth ! who first, with fostering ray,  
 Play'd round my morn of life, now gild my day,  
 (Nor shall one sullen vapour rise to lour,  
 And cloud its influence o'er my evening hour)  
 While you, in plighted faith, and mutual love,  
 Find joys on earth resembling those above,  
 And, proud a father's hallowed name to bear,  
 Taste pleasure's cordial in the cup of care,  
 Sad through a solitary world I stray,  
 With none to cheer my steps, nor chide my stay.

Not ours to slumber in supine content,  
 Or only wake to weep o'er time misspent :  
 To man a task is set, a blessing given,  
 To do the will, and earn the joys of heav'n.

Engrafted on the stock of DUTY rise  
 Fruits ever fair, transplanted from the skies,  
 And far more rare, more precious, than of old  
 Bloom'd on the Hesperian tree in living gold :  
 Than those more subtle to revive and save  
 \* Which to the wandering Chief great HERMES gave.

\* Odyssey, Book X. line 302.

Or HELEN crush'd to drug the wondrous bowl  
 \* That sooth'd his son, and stay'd his drooping soul ;  
 For these have power the wounded mind to heal,  
 And bid remorse itself forget to feel ;  
 And these are yours, who, gifted to excel,  
 Preferr'd in peace and privacy to dwell,  
 And chose the safe, sequester'd path, that steals  
 Far from the highway-crowd, and crash of wheels :  
 Who, skilled in that rare art, the art to live,  
 Ask not the world for more than it can give ;  
 But, taught to fear its strife, and shun its noise,  
 Disdain its honours, and distrust its joys,  
 Have sought content, not wealth, esteem, not fame,  
 And have deserved, though not desired, a name.  
 To thy pure mind reveal'd, in early youth,  
 The seeming paradox, but sovereign truth,  
 (Oft to the aged and the wise unknown)  
 That seeking others' good we find our own.  
 Generous self-love ! whose dictates to pursue  
 (Alas ! the unenvied privilege of few !)

\* Odyssey, Book IV. line 220.



Fills with such sweet employment every hour,  
 That whether wayward Fortune shine or lour,  
 Whether above ambition or below,  
 A bliss unborrow'd of the world we know,  
 And, blest in blessing, proudly can disclaim  
 Rank, riches, power, and (harder task!) ev'n fame.

The social Passions their own bliss create,  
 A bliss that's scarcely subject even to Fate.  
 Friendship though call'd to suffer or endure:  
 Love without hope, that finds, that seeks, no cure;  
 That can persist unknown, persist unshar'd,  
 For Love, like Virtue, is its own reward:  
 Pity though unavailing; vain Regret  
 For those we see no more, but ne'er forget,  
 (As pensive Memory all the past restores,  
 Yearns for the absent, or the lost deplores)  
 The Fear that watches in a mother's eye,  
 When first her infant breathes its feeble cry,  
 That never sleeps, but guards him, as he strays,  
 Through all the perils of his early days:  
 Even these, exposed to pain, alarm, or grief,  
 In their own generous nature find relief;

Nay, often, in the sharpest wounds they feel  
 There springs a balm that can do more than heal,  
 That can delight, as well as ease, impart,  
 A subtler pleasure kindle in the heart  
 Than selfish triumphs, or the dead repose,  
 The sullen quiet, that the Stoic knows.

Cold on the mountain-heath, exposed and bare,  
 The lone oak shudders in the troubled air,  
 Around his stem her arms no woodbine flings,  
 Beneath his shade no tender sapling springs;  
 His leaf untimely falls; his shattered form  
 Shrinks from the fury of the driving storm;  
 But born in happier soil, in grove or wood,  
 Shelter'd, his spreading branches long had stood,  
 And borne their annual honours green in age,  
 Safe from the summer-blaze, the winter's rage.

Emblem of him whose solitary cares  
 No partner of his pleasures more than shares:  
 For love too proud, for happiness too wise,  
 He looks on beauty with undazzled eyes,  
 Computes, compares, and gravely, sagely cold,  
 In cautious folly, rash delay, grows old;

Doubts till fastidious youth his suit derides,  
And Time (the coward's fortitude) decides.

Haply he seeks in mercenary arms  
Love's modest pleasures, and mysterious charms,  
Presumes to hope its transports can be sold,  
Trusting the weak omnipotence of gold.  
But these wealth cannot buy ; Vice cannot know ;  
Pure are the countless sources whence they flow ;  
From faith long tried, from lives that blend in one ;  
From many a soft word spoken, kind deed done ;  
Too small, perhaps, for each to have a name,  
Too oft recurring much regard to claim :  
As in fair constellations may combine  
The stars that, singly, undistinguish'd shine.  
Love, too, is proud, and will not be controll'd ;  
Timid, and must be rather guess'd than told ;  
Would be divined, but then by only one,  
And fain the notice of all else would shun ;  
It stays not to forgive, it cannot see  
The failings from which none, alas ! are free ;  
Blind but to faults, quick-sighted to descry  
Merit oft hid from a less searching eye ;

Ever less prone to doubt than to believe ;  
 Ever more glad to give than to receive ;  
 Constant as kind, tho' changing nature, name ;  
 Many, yet one ; another, yet the same :  
 'Tis Friendship, Pity, Joy, Grief, Hope, nay Fear,  
 Not the least tender when in form severe.  
 It dwells with every rank, in every clime,  
 And sets at nought the malice even of Time ;  
 In youth more rapturous, but in age more sure,  
 Chief blessing of the rich, sole comfort of the poor.

But mark the evening of the lone man's life !  
 Deserted then ! perhaps disturbed by strife !  
 Ah then ! in dreary age, 'tis his to sigh  
 For tender care, and soothing sympathy.  
 By his sick bed no long-lov'd face appears ;  
 No well-known step, no well-known voice he hears :  
 Strangers, for hire, his last sad moments tend ;  
 No children's prayers relenting heav'n ascend ;  
 He dies, and is forgot !—Scarce known his doom ;  
 And weeds soon hide his unfrequented tomb.

Start from thy trance, thou fool ! awake in time !  
 Snatch the short pleasures of thy fleeting prime !

While yet youth's healthful fever warms the blood,  
 And the pulse throbs in vigour's rapid flood ;  
 While love invites, whose spells possess the power  
 Ages of bliss to crowd into an hour !  
 Though to fond memory each blest hour appears  
 Rich with the transports of eventful years !  
 To Love alone such magic can belong :  
 The present still so short ! the past so long !

But youth is on the wing, and will not stay ;  
 Fair morn too oft of a foul wintery day !  
 A warm but watery gleam extinguished soon  
 In storm, or vapour, gathering o'er its noon :  
 And should the unwearied Sun shine on, till night  
 Quench his hot ray and cloud his cheerful light,  
 How fast the shadow o'er the dial flies !  
 While to himself fond man a debtor dies,  
 Trusting to-morrow still, or misemploy'd  
 He leaves the world unknown, and unenjoy'd.

Haste then as nature dictates dare to live ;  
 Ask of thy youth the pleasures youth should give :  
 So shall thy manhood and thy age confess  
 That of the past the present learns to bless ;

And thou shalt boast, with mingling joy and pride,  
 The wife, the mother, dearer than the bride,  
 And own, as on thy knees thy children grow,  
 That home becomes an early heav'n below.

There still an angel hovers o'er the fence,  
 To drive with flaming sword all evil thence :  
 There, in a little grove of kindred, rise  
 Those tender plants, the human charities,  
 Which, in the world's cold soil and boisterous air,  
 Withhold their blossoms, and refuse to bear,  
 Or, all unsheltered from the blaze of day,  
 Their golden fruit falls premature away.

Hail holy marriage ! hail indulgent law !  
 Whose kind restraints in closer union draw  
 Consenting hearts and minds :—By thee confin'd  
 Instinct's ennobled, and desire refined.  
 Man is a savage else, condemn'd to roam  
 Without companion, and without a home :  
 And helpless woman, as alone she strays,  
 With sighs and tears her new-born babe surveys ;  
 But chusing, chosen, never more to part,  
 New joys, new duties blending in her heart,

Endow'd alike to charm him and to mend,  
 Man gains at once a mistress and a friend :  
 In one fair form obtaining from above  
 An angel's virtues and a woman's love :  
 Then guarded, cherish'd, and confest her worth,  
 She scorns the pangs that give his offspring birth,  
 Lifts for his father's kiss the laughing boy,  
 And sees and shares his triumph and his joy.

Source of our bliss, and solace of our woe,  
 To thee our value as our joy we owe ;  
 On thee all morals, and all laws depend,  
 And, reft of thee, society must end !

This earth, resplendent in her rich array !  
 Herb, tree, fruit, flower ; yon radiant orb of day !  
 The moon, fair mirror of his soften'd light !  
 The stars that crowd the purple vault of night !  
 The wandering comet's bright, portentous train !  
 The expanse of heav'n ! th' illimitable main !  
 The storm that lifts its billows to the sky !  
 The bursting cloud whence fiery arrows fly !  
 The awful voice of thunder ! and the shock  
 Of earthquakes, when the Globe's huge pillars rock !

Its countless flocks and herds ! the savage brood  
 That shake the forest with their cries for food !  
 The unwieldy sovereigns of the living deep !  
 The shoals half-sentient in her caves that sleep !  
 The swarms that revel on each leaf and blade  
 In rainbow-hues, and burning gold array'd !  
 The exulting tenants of the peopled sky !  
 Those worlds on worlds that mock the assisted eye !  
 Stupendous Scene !—Could less than heav'n create  
 The parts so wond'rous of a whole so great ?  
 —Without their lord, the moral being Man,  
 Say what are all ?—a Chaos, not a plan ;  
 MAN placed on earth, behold the full design  
 Declares aloud its author is divine :  
 And hark ! a voice from heav'n proclaims his will  
 That favour'd man's immortal race should fill  
 The world's wide fields, o'er ev'ry tribe should reign,  
 Crown the whole work, and nought be made in vain.



## IV.—EPISTLE FROM THE ALPS.

“ Mi giovera narrare altrui

“ Le novità vedute, e dir, io fui ”—

TASSO GER. Lib. XV. 38.

THUN, 1816.

RELEAS'D at length I drop that heavy oar,  
Which thousands (once fast chain'd) must quit no  
more,

And like a steed let loose, that shakes his mane,  
And, loudly neighing, scours across the plain,  
With kindling hopes, and swelling heart, I fly  
For health and pleasure to a fairer sky.

The anchor's weigh'd, the north-wind fills the sail :  
Adieu, dear ENGLAND ! FRANCE, thy shores I hail !  
Not now to linger in thy lengthening plains,  
Or gilded city, revelling in its chains ;

Reft of its spoil, those miracles of art !  
 Which through th' enchanted eye exalt the heart :  
 For they reconquer'd twice, and repossess,  
 Shall with their rightful lords for ever rest ;  
 Borne back in triumph by the blood-stain'd arms  
 Of those, who from the cradle felt their charms ;  
 Yet bought too dearly in that gallant strife  
 By many a lov'd, and long lamented life.

Far to the south in joyful haste I run  
 To bask in valleys nearer to the sun ;  
 And lo ! where, fearless of his hottest fires,  
 High o'er the clouds the hoary ALP aspires !  
 In vain the thunder rolls, the lightnings fly,  
 His icy summit braves the burning sky.

O'er earth and heav'n what sudden splendours play,  
 As in the west declines the orb of day !  
 But ah ! the glory fades, and melts away.

As gay my hopes, as swiftly have they fled,  
 Of those bereft whose faltering steps I led,  
 Of those so dear, whose absence dims the day,  
 While sad and lonely onward still I stray.

Oh ! were they here the visions to behold,  
 That still before my moistening eyes unfold !

In vain !—for ENGLAND and for home they sail,  
 To shelter that sweet flower so fair, so frail,  
 Which now in hope, and now alas ! in fear,  
 They strive thro' sunshine, and thro' show'r, to rear.  
 Then flow my verse ! to soothe their just regret :  
 Nor their last wish, their parting charge forget.  
 The rude, faint sketch their patience shall forgive :  
 For how shall language bid the landscape live ?

See hills o'er hills in rich confusion rise !  
 (Their blue tops blending with the distant skies)  
 O'er the still lake their giant-shadows throw,  
 And view their awful forms revers'd below.  
 The dizzy pass where scarce the chamois goes  
 O'er seas of ice, and through eternal snows :  
 Th' o'erwhelming avalanche, of power to sweep  
 Flock, herd, and village down the yawning steep ;  
 High o'er the dark abyss the plank that bends  
 From cliff to cliff, now sinks, and now ascends  
 Beneath the hunter's foot, while, scarcely heard,  
 Sails far below, and screams the imperial bird.  
 The headlong Fall, on whose resplendent spray  
 In tiny circlets its own rainbows play :

(Oft from the summit flies the ponderous rock  
 Hurl'd down in thunder by the torrent's shock,  
 As on it foams, with many an oak up-torn,  
 Raging from morn to eve, from eve to morn)  
 The rifted chasm ; the cavern full of night,  
 Where the wild brook eludes the baffled sight :  
 The countless streams that feed the living lake,  
 And gently bid its slumbering waters wake ;  
 While from each bay, behind the sheltering trees,  
 Steals many a bark to catch the welcome breeze,  
 Spreads the white sail, or lifts the sparkling oar,  
 Seeking, for gain or sport, the distant shore,  
 Now o'er the willing wave exulting glides,  
 Now bravely struggles with the vanquished tides :  
 The wilderness of woods ! the vale of flowers !  
 Green, as in spring-time, through the sultry hours,  
 By hills o'er-arched that lend both shade and showers,

Haply of old some gentle Angel, sent  
 To heal some grief, or prompt some high intent,  
 To smite the oppressor, or uplift the opprest,  
 Returning homeward from his high behest,  
 Pleas'd with his work of justice or of grace,  
 Paus'd here, and left his blessing on the place.

So fair the land that as its children stray  
 Far from their country and their homes away,  
 If chance those simple, well-known, sounds they hear,  
 Though scarcely music to a stranger's ear,  
 Which on their native hills the milk-maid sings,  
 (While the slant sun his lengthening shadow flings)  
 Her wandering heifer homeward to recal  
 From the wild woodland to the sheltering stall,  
 What wonder that for these lov'd scenes they yearn,  
 And back, in sighs and tears, repentant turn?

But this the least, *HELVETIA*, of thy praise!  
 That in thee Nature all her charms displays,  
 And smiling sits on her exalted throne,  
 Fair in eternal youth, majestic and alone!  
 For safe within the rampart of thy rocks  
 Wander the myriads of thy herds and flocks,  
 The generous vine too gladdens all thy vales;  
 And sickness flies before thy mountain-gales;  
 And thine th' enlighten'd industry, that fills  
 With plenty every cottage on thy hills,  
 Whence, through the darkness of the busy night,  
 Gleams, starlike, many a taper's wakeful light;

Thine too each Son of Science, whether born  
 To teach of other worlds, or this adorn :  
 Bold, in the search of knowledge, to explore  
 The mine's tremendous secrets, or to soar  
 E'en to the glacier's point, and, safely there,  
 With mortal lips, inhale "empyrean air,"  
 And many a lofty Bard, and letter'd Sage,  
 Whose glory shall be thine from age to age.  
 In thee too Man is found, as man should be,  
 Active and brave, and innocent and free :  
 The last not least, for that secures the rest :  
 The willing slave deserves not to be blest ;  
 Nor merits more the tyrant, both debased,  
 And from the rank of man alike disgraced :  
 Both reft of all that should controul us here,  
 One without hope, the other without fear,  
 Torn all those sure, those subtle ties that bind  
 Man to his brother-man, and mind to mind.

Oh ! then ye natives of this happy land !  
 Assembling all, around your altars stand :  
 There shall the Spirits of your fathers rise,  
 To hear ye vow the patriot-sacrifice

Of every feud that separates clan from clan,  
And of your Union mars the heav'n-taught plan.  
Swear too that none, who dare in arms to strive  
For your best birthright, shall th' attempt survive,  
For well ye know the fraud and force of those  
(At once the unwisest and the worst of foes)  
Who thirst to enslave ye ; though the accursed deed,  
No gain to them, would make ye "poor indeed."  
Oh ! watch, from all your hills, with wary eye,  
The smallest cloud, that darkens in the sky,  
Drawn from your own, or from a foreign soil,  
To blight the harvest of your fathers' toil.  
Revere the sacred memory of the Dead,  
Nor lose the liberty for which they bled ;  
Fulfil the trust to your own children due,  
And leave them all your Sires bequeath'd to you.  
For so, when gather'd to their ashes, long  
Your names shall live in story and in song.  
Nor are your hills the limits of your fame,  
Wide as the world the gratitude you claim ;  
All, in your freedom free, your cause shall bless,  
Refuge of all whom prince or priest oppress.

Doom'd for his virtues or his faith to roam,  
 In you the injured exile finds a home\* ;  
 Safe and revered, the Patriot and the Sage  
 Smile at the Monk's, or Tyrant's, harmless rage.

And yet, though fair the land, the people blest,  
 In thee, in thee, dear ENGLAND ! would I rest :  
 I love thee better still the more I roam :  
 Proud of thee as my country and my home :  
 Thou fear'st not foreign nor domestic foes,  
 Thy laws no haughty neighbour dares impose ;  
 Safe in thy valiant sons, thy subject-sea,  
 Thou dost not ask permission to be free :  
 Nay ! had thy Spartan youth no wall of waves,  
 A world confederate could not make them slaves,  
 So early taught to think a freeman's life  
 Not worth preserving, vanquish'd in that strife.

But 'tis not now my theme to boast thy charms,  
 Thou land of wealth and virtue, arts and arms !  
 Thou art my choice, though changeful, though austere  
 Thy clime ; and oft in pain, and oft in fear,

\* Alas ! this praise is no longer deserved.



My panting lip, and labouring breast, inhale  
The winter lingering in thy vernal gale.

Henceforth (my skill forgot, my strength no more)  
I quit life's stormy sea, and seek the shore;  
My only task the footsteps to pursue  
(Far, far behind !) of those, the virtuous few,  
Who serve, without reward, in Freedom's cause,  
And hourly watch the sanctuary of her laws.  
No more, oh London ! but when duty calls,  
To breathe the cloud that hovers o'er thy walls,  
To stem thy crowds, endure thy deafening noise,  
Gaze at thy splendours, or repent thy joys.  
From thee far off I turn my willing feet  
To the lone quiet of my lov'd retreat;  
To stray from field to field in careless ease,  
And count the blossoms on the tardy trees;  
Climb the high down to meet the rising sun,  
Or in my copse his mid-day fervour shun.  
Oft as he sinks, accomplished Lock ! behind  
Thy solemn groves, up thy steep lawn I wind  
Unseen, unheard, to mark his crimson ray  
Gleam through the gathering clouds, and fade away

Then, homeward turning, oft the past review;  
 Learning from old faults to escape from new;  
 Or call back joys long-fled, that would not stay,  
 Slighted perhaps in youth's presumptuous day,  
 (Yet youth to age a lesson oft can give,  
 And teach its timorous wisdom how to live).  
 Now, dreaming though awake, I soar in air,  
 And build a thousand gorgeous castles there;  
 Then drop into my cottage-home content;  
 The night's repose earn'd by the day well-spent.  
 Still happier when by those my Board is cheer'd  
 (Kindred or friends) whom love has long endear'd,  
 Or should some honour'd Guest, half smiling, deign  
 To trace the limits of my little reign,  
 Then proud of both, each varying scene I show  
 The impending cliff, the gulfy stream below;  
 The box-clad hill, in whose unfading groves,  
 Fragrant and fair, the lingering traveller roves;  
 The grey church-spire, the tree-embosom'd town;  
 The clustering flocks that crowd the upland-down;  
 The distant mountain with its far-seen tower,  
 Now a sad purple in the summer-shower,

Now smiling, as the air-born colours play,  
 And the sun's course from dawn to dark betray;  
 The druid-grove, where many a reverend Yew  
 Hides from his thirsty beam the noontide dew;  
 The swelling steeps of Norbury's beech-crown'd height  
 Where lovely nature, tasteful art, unite  
 To lure the Traveller's eye, and then detain,  
 Spell-bound, and loth to leave the fair domain.

Meanwhile I listen with attentive ear  
 To catch his magic accents, as they veer  
 From wit to wisdom; his, upon whose tongue  
 The fate of his lov'd Ireland oft has hung;  
 Or his, before whose philosophic eye  
 The mists, that cover man's best knowledge fly;  
 Destin'd his country's glories to record,  
 And give her chiefs their last and best reward.  
 His too, who sings so well in Memory's praise  
 That She shall ne'er forget his deathless lays;  
 His, at whose bidding Science, like the Day,  
 Enlightens all with an impartial ray;  
 Who, lavish of his intellectual store,  
 Scatters (best alms!) instruction to the poor;

His Ends, with sleepless energy, pursues,  
 And those the noblest Ends that Man can choose.  
 Or his, whom, in the Senate, modest worth  
 Had raised to rank unknown to rank or birth,  
 Or his (both mute in an untimely grave \* !)  
 Wont to redress the wrong'd, protect the slave ;  
 Arraign the Greatest guilty ; or persuade  
 Stern Law to sheathe her sanguinary blade.

With such to live the envied lot be mine,  
 Pleas'd for the few the many to resign.  
 Blest in the esteem of such, and self-respect  
 More precious still, how vain the world's neglect !  
 How vain its honours ! oft too dearly bought,  
 And worth the having only when unsought.

Ah ! " hopes too fondly nurs'd, too rudely crost "  
 Even now I mourn for some for ever lost,  
 Not only mine, but their sad country's boast.

Not long I weep, to follow I prepare,  
 I would not be the last that heav'n shall spare ;  
 Still some are left me, long in friendship tried,  
 Whose converse cheers me, and whose counsels guide.

• Added in 1819.

Lov'd too, by those departed ; and, in fame,  
In genius, equal—equal, not the same ;  
With these I ask life's few last hours to spend ;  
Then calmly meet, nor wish'd, nor fear'd, its end.

## V.—EPISTLE TO A VERY YOUNG LADY.

BADEN BADE, 1821.

BEHOLD, dear Girl, at your request,  
A letter to yourself addrest,  
And written, as you wished, in rhyme,  
And dated from a foreign clime.

For now, once more, abroad I roam  
In search of what I leave at home,  
Pleasure—which follow'd loves to fly,  
But waited for, still hovers nigh.  
And yet I go, and go alone :  
Perhaps by penance to atone  
For follies past, of ancient date,  
Having committed none of late.

But ah ! I see your well-known smile,  
And hear you laughing too the while :

Though 'tis a gentle voice I hear,  
That only jests, and cannot jeer.

No matter why—the sea I crost,  
Not sick, though somewhat rudely tost :  
And now am posting up the RHINE,  
Fam'd for old castles and old wine ;  
Thanks to my light calèche which steals  
Onward on yet unbroken wheels ;  
Though jolting, shaking my poor bones,  
O'er the rough pavé's rattling stones,  
Or grating gravel by the side,  
When leave by ruts is not denied.

How one gets on 'tis hard to say,  
Still for the cattle doom'd to stay ;  
Some carrying hay, the others hired,  
They must be fed too, and are tired :  
The small third horse (their right by law)  
That will look back, and will not draw ;  
The trace and bridle of old rope  
Sure soon to break, and balk your hope :  
In vain you cry " Well now we're gone,"  
The driver's off as soon as on ;

Still something in the tackle wrong  
 This is too short, and that too long.  
 In vain you threaten, coax, or bribe  
 This smoking, dozing, self-will'd tribe,  
 Proud of the terrors of the whip,  
 The huge moustachio on the lip,  
 The high-cock'd hat, and tassell'd horn,  
 They hear you—but they hear with scorn :  
 And when you to the town-gate get  
 Thinking to enter—" Hold "—" Not yet."  
 A thousand questions you must answer,  
 " Or to get in you have no chance Sir !"  
 As—what you are, and what's your name,  
 Whither you're going, whence you came ;  
 " Your passport Sir "—Heav'ns ! that's mislaid,  
 Yourself you absolve, your man upbraid,  
 " Of sense he surely is bereft "  
 You wonder " where it can be left,"  
 Then search and search, and (humbled) find it,  
 Just in the very place assign'd it.

Fam'd HEIDELBERG I reach at last.  
 Repaid for toil, and dangers, past :



The prying custom-house at DOVER,  
 The long, or stormy passage over,  
 The favourite packet t'other side,  
 And that one sails in losing tide ;  
 The capering boat that comes from CALAIS  
 To wet you through and spoil your valise :  
 Then through the surf the ride astraddle,  
 A Frenchman's shoulders for your saddle.

But thanks to WATT, the gale may blow,  
 The restless tide may ebb or flow,  
 Self-mov'd the fire-fraught vessel flies,  
 Heedless of adverse seas and skies.

But lo ! what sudden visions rise  
 Before my charm'd, my dazzled eyes !  
 What awful Ruins, high in air,  
 The subject mountains proudly bear !  
 Of Gothic kings the ancient home,  
 The unconquer'd foes of baffled ROME,  
 And now believ'd their dwelling-place,  
 Though lost by their degenerate race ;  
 For oft, with solemn, wild affright,  
 Unearthly sounds, at dead of night,

Are heard along the mouldering walls  
Of these unroof'd, deserted halls ;  
While armed Statues lie around  
Prostrate and humbled, on the ground !

With what delight these paths I tread,  
And trace the footsteps of the dead !  
The terraces and gardens fair,  
Where many a flower still scents the air,  
Once throng'd by those who grac'd the Court ;  
By dames, and Peers, of lofty port.  
Still to the way-worn pilgrim dear ;  
The love-lorn bard still lingers here,  
And listens to the funeral cry  
Of night-birds, wailing as they fly.  
And still, at eve, each holy-day  
Here crowd the pensive and the gay ;  
These bowery steps ascending slow  
From the tower'd City, far below.  
Yet wherefore climb the arduous height ?  
And quit that valley of delight ?  
Beside yon rocky mountain stream  
Well may the youthful poet dream,

The traveller pause, the idler stray,  
 Unconscious of the waning day,  
 And mark the proud sail bending low  
 Beneath the humble arch to flow ;  
 The jointed raft, now, snake-like, glide,  
 Now dart impetuous down the tide :  
 The unwieldy barge, o'erladen, creep,  
 Scarce floating on the murmuring Deep :  
 In each calm bay reflected far  
 The crimson West, the unquench'd star,  
 Or on the hills the cottage-light  
 Appear, and vanish from the sight :  
 Then, home returning, seek again  
 The cheerful haunts of busy men.

Could Britain (heav'n forbid it !) barter  
 For aught on earth, her freedom's charter,  
 Or change, through wantonness or fear,  
 Those laws that she should most revere,  
 Self-banish'd I could be content  
 Here, with a few, to pitch my tent,  
 Here, end my days, and bless my lot,  
 Forget the past, and be forgot.

Sweet BADEN too, that seat of pleasure !  
 Where monarchs spend their hard-earn'd leisure,  
 And (more attractive guests) the fair,  
 Whose smiles a crowd of suitors share ;  
 How shall my verse, so rude, so weak,  
 Presume thy countless charms to speak ?  
 Thy groves and glens, thy lawns and hills ;  
 The virtues of thy fuming rills :  
 Thy castled heights, thy gay château,  
 Its caverns, dark and deep below :  
 The bright fantastic spires that crown  
 The steeps of thy aspiring town :  
 Thy shelter'd paths with many a seat,  
 Where the shy strangers fear to meet,  
 And scarcely dare each other note,  
 Though neighbours at the table d'hôte,  
 The morning walk, the ride by day,  
 At night the bath, the ball, the play.

Yet here, ev'n here, is wanting still  
 Somewhat the craving heart to fill.  
 Of those I love if one were here,  
 One only, my lone steps to cheer,

Wert thou but leaning on my arm,  
All, all would more than doubly charm :  
The groves in brighter hues would glow,  
The streams in sweeter murmurs flow.  
Still more were she our walks to share,  
Who, with a more than mother's care,  
Thy tender years from harm protects,  
Thy manners forms, thy mind directs ;  
Or he, so near in blood allied,  
Once my companion, now my guide :  
Or others, easily divin'd,  
To me so dear, to me so kind.

Farewell ! I leave ye with regret  
Ye scenes that I may ne'er forget !  
Far wilder those to which I go,  
Mountains, and vales of summer-snow :  
Now too, with compliments to friends,  
This long and dull epistle ends ;  
For I am tired, and so are you,  
Adieu, my dearest Ward, adieu !

## VI.—EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

INSPRUCK, 1821.

To thee my old, my valued friend  
 Health from the TYROL hills I send.  
 Oh ! that I *had* the power to grant  
 The only blessing thou canst want,  
 Health ! of heav'n's gifts almost the best,  
 Without it what are all the rest ?

Come quit with me the world of care,  
 And breathe this salutary air.  
 That world together we began,  
 Its toilsome race together ran ;  
 Together let us seek repose,  
 And husband life, so near its close :  
 Fanning the embers of that fire,  
 Which else might unawares expire.

But no !—'tis still thy praise to find  
 The joys that suit thy vigorous mind  
 In scenes of energy, not ease,  
 (The joys that on reflection please,)  
 From a lov'd wife and children round :  
 Of all delights the sweetest found !  
 From affluence and from honour gain'd  
 By arduous duties well-sustained ;  
 From gratitude for harms repress,  
 For rights maintain'd, and wrongs redrest.

But yet my friend there is a time  
 (Believe the truth though told in rhyme)  
 When life should not be spent too fast,  
 But be economis'd to last.

Of Time (so short at best !) aware  
 How little I can have to spare,  
 All cares, save duties, I decline,  
 And ev'n ambition now resign.  
 But little miss'd I freely roam,  
 Leaving a solitary home :  
 Yet oft of those that most I prize  
 The well-known forms around me rise ;

Still when my evening-walk is o'er,  
 My inn regain'd, and shut my door,  
 My winged thoughts delight to stray  
 O'er land and sea, far, far away :  
 Some face I see, some voice I hear,  
 By absence render'd doubly dear,  
 And in sweet visions pass the night,  
 Chas'd only by the unwelcom'd light.

The day returns : yet still I seem,  
 Though broad awake, as much to dream :  
 So strange the sights that then appear,  
 So strange the accents that I hear.

Behold the Stork ascend to perch  
 On the green spire of yon tall church !  
 Which, like each house, is storied o'er  
 With tales of legendary lore :  
 The dragon vanquished by the knight :  
 The monk that fiends in vain would fright ;  
 Who prays, though fires around him rise,  
 To her that beckons from the skies :  
 The Giant-form of aspect mild,  
 That on his shoulder bears a child,



And walks the water as 'twere land,  
 Wielding an oak-tree in his hand :  
 The Saint that bears the labourer's yoke  
 And with the beggar shares his cloak,  
 Or he, whose cup has power to drown  
 The flames, that threat th' affrighted Town.

But see the *living* motley mass !  
 The dress uncouth that marks each class ;  
 The bare-foot son, the bare-kneed sire,  
 The hat, now tapering like the spire,  
 Now broader than a broad umbrella,  
 Black, white and blue, pea-green or yellow.  
 The women too—but that's a task,  
 That well a hundred tongues might ask,  
 That well a hundred tongues might tire,  
 So strange, so various, their attire.

Contrasted thus in outward show,  
 Their minds few shades of difference know ;  
 Priest-ridden, ignorant, unrefin'd,  
 But just, and brave, and not unkind ;  
 Of each the employment, every day,  
 To eat and drink and smoke and pray

At every hour, in every street,  
 The tinkling bell and Host you meet :  
 At every turn the traveller sees  
 Crosses almost as thick as trees ;  
 And not a little scorn it rouses  
 To note more chapels built than houses ;  
 Monks, Friars too, black, white, grey or brown,  
 With cord, and cowl, and shaven-crown,  
 With surplice, tunic, cloak or vest,  
 Lazy and harmless at the best.

Ill fated man ! whose doom is such  
 That still too little, or too much,  
 Is taught his unsuspecting youth,  
 By those who scorn, or fear, the truth.

Better, far better, of the two,  
 To hold each tale devoutly true  
 That priests have feign'd, or beldames old  
 Have taught, and trembled as they told ;  
 Than in suspense be tost about  
 From faith to faith, from doubt to doubt,  
 Or think, if it deserve that name,  
 That all from chance, from nothing, came.

Man in foul air may draw his breath,  
 Exhaust it, and he sinks in death.  
 For life he needs some atmosphere,  
 For health one uncorrupt and clear.

Yet worse, far worse, th' accursed creed  
 That those who err, or doubt, should bleed,  
 Or suffer torture, loss, or shame,  
 Because their faith is not the same,  
 As Pope, or Priest, or Presbyter,  
 Boasting they can, or do not, err,  
 Have dared in folly, or in fraud,  
 As heav'n's decree to send abroad,  
 Blaspheming, wronging, (impious plan !)  
 Their maker, God ; their brother, man.

Hark ! hear ye not that cry so dread ?  
 The living mourning for the dead—  
 And see ye not yon sight of woe ?  
 The dying made a public show.  
 That rolling beat, that thrilling blast,  
 Proclaim that one now breathes his last :  
 The bloody wheel, the flaming stake,  
 Failing his dauntless heart to shake,

The irrevocable word was giv'n,  
That sends a soul to hell, or heav'n.

Oh say, ye mourners, what the deeds,  
Unnatural, foul, for which he bleeds ?  
Just heav'n ! ye know not—all ye know  
That in yon dungeon, dark, and low,  
He groan'd in chains for many a year,  
Unheard his sigh, unseen his tear,  
And that he now lies breathless here.  
The Holy Office knows the rest,  
Their secrets never are confest.  
Haply some dogma he denied,  
To check some vile abuse he tried :  
He might be evil, might be just,  
But all is darkness, and distrust.

Not thus in ENGLAND, no ! thank God !  
There bigots wield a broken rod,  
Though smiting with an iron-hand  
Yon verdant isle's devoted land.

Brought home thus by an episode  
I'll there take up a short abode :  
Or, to speak plainly, I think best  
To give myself, and you, some rest :

Not without hope that this may find you  
 At FREDLEY, business left behind you,  
 Reclin'd beneath that ancient yew  
 Whence most the landscape charms the view,  
 Or strolling o'er the busy farm,  
 With Jane or Sarah on your arm :  
 But they, a side-saddle for their seat,  
 Scamper on other people's feet,  
 Up fam'd BOXHILL, or MICKLEHAM-down,  
 Or to buy pins in DORKING-town.

Perchance you hear what Jane relates  
 Of fair Helvetia's happy States ;  
 Or of gay PARIS does she speak ?  
 That has no Sunday in her week,  
 So greedy both of gain and pleasure,  
 Breaking for both that day of leisure.  
 Or if the sun, by some rare chance,  
 Should through the clouds a moment glance,  
 Then, with your lady by your side,  
 Along the sheltering copse you glide,  
 Or now, at eve, you sit in door,  
 And turn some classic author o'er ;

One haply of the illustrious dead,  
Whom, young, together oft we read.  
But now, sometimes, to own the truth,  
It is not as it was, in youth :  
When after dinner one applies,  
The glimmering letters tease the eyes,  
The book too is so apt to fall !  
And then, methinks, 'tis time to call,  
As you do now, " John ! bring the light,  
" I'll go to bed"—Good night ! good night !

## VII.—EPISTLE TO A BROTHER.

BÉX, 1821.

OH ! that one friendly cloud would rise,  
 To mitigate these burning skies !  
 Or that in some sequester'd bay  
 Floating upon the wave I lay ;  
 While o'er my head the branches play'd  
 Of some vast oak, a sun-proof shade !  
 And gentle showers fell pattering round ;  
 Beneath the leaves I'd bless the sound.

My mind relax'd, my body too  
 Thaws and “ resolves itself into a dew ! ”  
 While yet I'm visible I'll run  
 From ITALY's inclement sun ;  
 For Summer scorches hill and vale,  
 Dries up the streams, and taints the gale.  
 Not till yon beaming orb declines,  
 Thridding the last utumnal Signs,

And in the thirsty river-bed  
The clouds of stifling dust are laid,  
Yon barrier-Alps to reascend,  
And tow'rds the imperial City bend.

As through the glittering peaks I go  
Reviv'd I tread the bracing snow ;  
Each little patch of pasture green,  
Each eddying gust, tho' biting keen ;  
The very mists that curling rise  
And blend the mountains with the skies,  
My pulses calm, my strength restore,  
And bid me breathe and move once more,  
Ne'er to lament, in prose or rhyme,  
The rigours of our northern clime.  
What though, now gentle, now severe,  
From point to point the breezes veer,  
And many a cloud the heavens obscure :  
From pestilence, from plague secure,  
Still nerv'd to enjoy, and broad awake,  
Our lot, so scorn'd, content we take,  
Nor envy those their heat and light  
Who sleep at noon as well as night.



'Twas thus the rude epistle ran  
 Which on the ARNO I began :  
 Now happy at your favorite B&A  
 And cool, far other feelings sway.  
 Here grateful Memory fain would praise  
 Fair ITALY in living lays :  
 But this demands a loftier strain,  
 And I must seek her vales again ;  
 Again peruse her storied walls  
 In solemn temples, sumptuous halls,  
 Where all the rival arts conspire  
 To charm, to touch, and to inspire.

Ah ! hapless land where prince and priest  
 And stranger-tyrants ("last not least")  
 Thy rights deny, thy arms deride,  
 And, in the fulness of their pride,  
 Or jealous of thy former fame,  
 Would rob thee of thy very name.

Oh ! when will the avenger rise ?  
 Touch'd by his country's stifled cries,  
 (Not loud, but such as those can hear  
 To whom their country still is dear)

And, gathering round him host on host,  
 From the ALPS to far CALABRIA's coast,  
 Lay, by one bold resistless blow,  
 Never to rise, the oppressor low ?

The Usurper fled, behold once more  
 Freedom thy arts and arms restore !  
 But, ere that hour of bliss return,  
 Thy humbled, scatter'd Sons must earn,  
 Must bravely earn their liberty ;  
 First be victorious, then be free !  
 That blessing must their courage nerve,  
 Which to desire is to deserve :  
 Old feuds they must forget, forgive,  
 And as ONE mighty people live ;  
 Then shall the world allow their claim  
 To more than ev'n their ancient fame.

Not yet !—still holds the vile intrigue,  
 Self-nam'd, in fraud, THE HOLY LEAGUE !  
 No bigot-folly, but far worse,  
 Of heav'n the mockery, earth the curse :  
 For though the scepter'd Robbers scorn  
 Each his confederate, yet “ they've sworn ”

They "have an oath in heav'n" and must  
(Good men!) be impious and unjust.

Once, by the grateful world confest,  
Here was a refuge for the opprest.  
But now, in vain the Patriot flies  
From his lov'd home, and native skies ;  
In vain of broken faith complains,  
Dragg'd back to death, or, worse, to chains.  
Great as thou art, my country, thou  
Canst scarce protect the stranger now !  
In secret fetter'd to their cause  
The Despots dictate ev'n thy laws \*.  
But, thanks to heav'n ! there is a Land  
Above their influence, or command,  
Virtuous their maxims to despise,  
And strong their violence to chastise.  
Haste ! weigh the anchor, spread the sail  
Wide to the welcome eastern gale :  
Still, still the setting sun pursue ;  
Driv'n from the old world seek the new :

\* The Nation has resumed its ancient generosity and independence, 1824.'

There fear no more the Exile knows,  
 But from his hunters finds repose,  
 His own, his country's wrongs proclaims,  
 And safe, the baffled tyrant shames.

Yet blame not this just people still,  
 It is their weakness, not their will,  
 That yields consent to those that hate,  
 And fain would crush each unking'd state.  
 O'er-look this blemish, and once more  
 The wonders of this land explore :  
 Beheld with rapture, left with pain,  
 Yet felt more deeply seen again,  
 Than when at first, with hurried pace,  
 Surpris'd, subdued, these scenes we trace.  
 To loftier heights the hills aspire ;  
 In deeper gloom the glens retire ;  
 With sweeter sounds the waters flow,  
 More brightly their reflections glow.

For who can, self-possest, behold  
 The visions these wild vales unfold ?  
 The mountains of eternal snow ?  
 The abyss of rifted ice below ? .

The bridge that springs from rock to rock,  
 And trembles to the torrent's shock ?  
 The fearful pass, whose cliffs between  
 A line of sky is scarcely seen ?  
 The liquid crystal of the rill  
 That gushes from the rocky hill ?  
 The inland sea, now calm in sleep,  
 Now, waken'd, an o'erwhelming deep ?

Here first, long since, at your request,  
 I came, and found delight and rest ;  
 And now with joy my o'er-travell'd feet,  
 Return to this belov'd Retreat :  
 Where, on the loud, tumultuous RHONE  
 From dawn to dark I muse alone ;  
 Or listen to the vesper-bell  
 Echoing through many a craggy dell :  
 Or, as the soft green lawn I tread,  
 While chestnuts flower above my head,  
 The far-off LEMAN LAKE descry,  
 Fair mirror of the changeful sky !  
 Now silvery-smooth, now sparkling gold ;  
 Or, o'er the humbler Alps, behold

Those glowing Peaks that long detain  
 The sun's last rays, tho' dark the Plain,  
 Then, pale and wan in the cold night-air,  
 Look like the ghosts of what they were :  
 Or mark with awe the mouldering towers,  
 That tell of long-departed hours ;  
 The cliffs that guard the little gate ;  
 Frail barrier between State and State !

More charm'd from hour to hour—and yet  
 With far more pleasure than regret,  
 Homeward at length my steps I turn ;  
 My eyes for other objects yearn ;  
 The fire-side circle, small and dear,  
 Narrowing, ah narrowing every year !  
 The chosen, or the neighbour-friend,  
 The servant pleas'd and proud to attend ;  
 The well-known door, and even the bed,  
 On which, so oft reclined, my head  
 Sweet rest has found, or vainly sought  
 Through the long night of troubled thought.

How slowly, eager to arrive,  
 I think the dull postilions drive !

The leagues seem longer, and the pavé  
Is surely grown more rough and heavy.  
Yet haply 'tis in vain I haste,  
Doom'd, as before, whole days to waste  
Pacing till night on Calais-pier,  
Invoking winds that will not hear;  
While not a packet dares to sail,  
Aw'd by the equinoctial gale;  
Still looking o'er to that white shore  
Where I so long to tread once more.  
E'en now in thought I spring to land,  
And grasp o'erjoy'd a brother's hand.

## VIII.—EPISTLE TO A FRIEND AT HIS VILLA.

CHAMOUNY, 1823.

At length you fly from smoke and noise,  
To wholesome air and tranquil joys,  
From Rout and Ball, from Park and Play,  
(Day turn'd to night, and night to day,)  
To cheerful rides at morning-hours,  
And evening-walks 'mid shrubs and flowers,  
Where broad, and bright, the stately Thames  
From the charm'd guest due homage claims ;  
As o'er its wave the white sail glides,  
Or the swift steam-boat stems the tides.

But ah ! the Town diffuses far  
Its gloomy atmosphere of care ;  
The murmurs of its strife assail  
The peace of each surrounding vale :



O'er many a mile must toil the feet  
 That seek an undisturb'd retreat :  
 Its pride and vanity are wont  
 The meek and humble to affront,  
 And, though forbidden to oppress,  
 To make them think their little less.

But you, who all its stores command,  
 Yet its temptations can withstand,  
 Its pleasures quit without regret,  
 And quickly all its cares forget.  
 More timorous I for safety run,  
 And wisely the rough conflict shun.

Once more amid th' eternal snows  
 The frozen Alps around me close,  
 Though flames the summer-sun on high,  
 Just seen athwart the narrow sky ;  
 The beam of fire, the whelming rain,  
 Beat on these ice-built rocks in vain :  
 For reconciled the Seasons here  
 Dance hand in hand throughout the year.  
 In this disorder, these extremes,  
 As if in sport wild Nature seems

To scorn restraint, and break all laws ;  
 Alarm'd we fly to her great Cause,  
 And, awed though tranquillised, we hail  
 The goodness that can never fail  
 Of Him, who all these wonders plann'd,  
 And in whose presence *here* we stand,  
 Who gave us (grateful let us kneel !)  
 Eyes to discern, and hearts to feel.

Let then th' aerial spire arise,  
 And tower on tower invade the skies ;  
 On clustering shafts the proud dome raise ;  
 With gems and gold the walls emblaze ;  
 Bid Art with Truth wage generous strife,  
 And soften marble into life :  
 Then consecrate, in pomp, the pile,  
 While wondering angels gaze and smile ;  
*Here* are his temples, *here* his court !  
 Hither the Pilgrim should resort ;  
 Not cross the desert's burning sands  
 To bow at altars built by hands,  
 Nor to LORETTO's shrine repair,  
 Though Spirits bore it through the air.

Nurs'd in these scenes sublime, severe,  
 The wild, but pious Mountaineer  
 Learns their great Author to revere :  
 Gentle, though ever prone to dare,  
 And, when the need is, firm to bear,  
 'Tis his to extort by patient toil  
 His hard fare from the churlish soil :  
 Through pathless hills to guide, and save  
 The wanderer from a sudden grave.  
 Or, on his pike-staff bounding high,  
 From rock to rock, o'er torrents fly :  
 Or, cowering, on his knees to creep  
 Along the ridge of some tall steep,  
 Chasing the Chamois—"dreadful calling ;"  
 Ever 'mid sights, and sounds appalling ;  
 Above ! the avalanche !—below,  
 The crevasse in the treacherous snow !  
 Where Death lurks, waiting for his prey,  
 Watching the hunter on his way.  
 The path breaks down—Behold he falls !  
 In vain to climb the glassy walls

He strives, and strives :—he shouts in vain,  
 Far far from all the haunts of men ;  
 Deep in the narrow chasm he lies,  
 No more to see the cheerful skies ;  
 Not one of all his soul holds dear  
 To close his eyes, or dress his bier :  
 Unknown his burial-place, though guess'd  
 Alas ! too truly, all the rest.  
 They search, but find not. He must lie  
 For ever hid from human eye.  
 Yet bites not there the insulting worm,  
 Even Time respects his manly form :  
 He still shall sleep, unchang'd, tho' lost,  
 Embalm'd in everlasting frost.

Alive that manly form could please,  
 Though clad in undy'd robe of frieze.  
 Heav'ns ! how unlike the half-sex'd Beau,  
 Screw'd in new stays for Rotten-row !  
 With tiny coat, but huge cravat,  
 Rings, seals, and glasses, and " all that ! "  
 Enough—Farewell ! with higher matter  
 'Tis wrong to blend truth so like satire.

## IX.—EPISTLE TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

ROME, 1823.

LUR'D by thy verse, behold once more  
Thy friend fair ITALY explore !  
And though, by suffering taught, I shun  
Her unrelenting summer-sun,  
Yet now I woo his beams, to cheer  
The gloom of an expiring year :  
Where, 'mid the ruins round her spread,  
ROME lifts on high her mitred head,  
Once circled by the imperial crown,  
To which a subject-world bow'd down.

Now weak tho' reverend, in decay  
She scarcely claims her ancient sway ;  
But begs a little homage, paid  
Less to the living than the dead,

Whose honour'd tombs, now mouldering round,  
Can consecrate the very ground.

Palace and dome scarce heeded rise,  
More sees the memory than the eyes.  
Yet here (the work of modern hands)  
In state, the noblest temple stands,  
That to his great Creator's praise  
The piety of man could raise :  
Here too, like breathing nature warm,  
Dwells many a bright, angelic Form,  
Hewn from the rock by matchless skill,  
Once Gods, and almost worshipp'd still !  
And here the pencil's magic hues  
Their spells along the walls diffuse,  
Calling saints, heroes, from the grave,  
Again to teach, again to save.

Th' eternal city as I trace  
The present to the past gives place :  
The Spirits of the Dead appear,  
And sounds divine transport my ear ;  
I listen, heedless of the throng,  
To TULLY's speech, or MARO's song.

Now, winding through the sculptur'd arch  
 Behold the long triumphal march :  
 Or mark the warrior-horseman leap  
 Fearlessly down the yawning deep :  
 Or him, who, singly, dares oppose  
 (Striding the bridge) a host of foes.  
 Now, shuddering, the stern consul see  
 His rebel sons to death decree ;  
 Or, in the Senate, hail the blow,  
 That lays the great Usurper low.  
 But who, on thrones, in robes of state  
 Silently sit, and smile at Fate ?  
 The Conscript-sires—though fierce and rude  
 The Conqueror is himself subdued,  
 Drops the red spear, and bends the knee,  
 Esteeming each a Deity !

Oh ! how in latter life it cheers  
 To triumph o'er the power of years !  
 Calm'd not exhausted to perceive  
 That we can feel, admire, believe  
 E'en to the last, as in our prime,  
 Spite of the malice of old Time.

Not more our joy, than pride, to know  
 That the chill'd blood again can glow ;  
 That Fancy still has wings to soar  
 High as she oft was wont before :  
 And Hope still listens to her song,  
 As erst when credulous and young :  
 That there are vales, where smiling Spring  
 Is lovelier than the poets sing ;  
 And Nature's bright realities  
 Transcend what Painting can devise :  
 Where May can trust, in field and bower,  
 Her blossoms to the morning-hour,  
 Nor dreads the venomous East should breathe,  
 To blight the flowerets in her wreath ;  
 Where scarcely swells a bud in vain  
 Of blushing fruit, or golden grain.

Alas ! fair Land ! that thy rich dower,  
 Should ever be the prize of power.  
 Yielded to Vandal, Moor, or Gaul,  
 Or Bigot-sloth, far worse than all !  
 Oh Grief ! that blessings too profuse  
 Should turn to curses by th' abuse ;



That Virtue, Freedom, still must fly  
For shelter to a frozen sky !

Like gold all Good requires alloy,  
We learn by suffering to enjoy.

Once thy possessors, great in arms,  
Defended, and deserv'd thy charms,  
Well taught (alas ! in times gone by)  
Bravely to conquer, or to die.

Then the rude Hun rough welcome found,  
And with his bones manur'd the ground,  
Though now his haughty banner waves  
High o'er his vanquish'd fathers' graves.

Now must thy humbled sons regret,  
The present bear, the past forget,  
Blush when they hear their fathers' fame,  
And hide in smiles their grief and shame ;  
Not long—soon shall the smouldering fire,  
Explode in thunder, or expire ;

Oh ! not the last !—in vain they dare  
(The crown'd conspirators) to share  
The earth between them, as their prey  
Willing to suffer and obey.

As soon shall they forbid the sun,  
Save at their will, his course to run,  
Arrest the ocean-tides, or bind  
The pinions of the wandering wind.

What though of much the Land's bereft,  
Enough to regain *all* is left !  
Art, Science, Letters still survive  
The Liberty that bade them thrive :  
And many a poet of high name  
Upholds his country's former fame.  
Thy latest theme; well chos'n by thee  
The bard inspir'd by Memory !  
And greatly shall thy lasting lay  
Her hospitality o'erpay :  
Long long the rival to remain  
Ev'n of her noblest native strain.

## X.—EPISTLE TO THE LORD HOLLAND.

“ *Feros mollite colendo* ”—GEOR. II. 36.

WINDERMERE, 1829.

ASK not what charms there are in scenes like these,  
Wild hills, and clamorous brooks, and inland-seas !  
In the sweet face of nature to delight  
Will not in thee surprise or scorn excite.

But 'tis not only mountain, lake and stream,  
(Though here as fair as a young poet's dream)  
No ! here a generous Peasantry we find,  
Of graceful form and cultivated mind :  
Here, too, a Gentry that may well preside  
O'er men thus gifted and not void of pride.  
To them the earth her annual tribute yields  
As Lords, not tenants, of their native fields :

Yet to their sons the sires bequeathed far more  
 Than land, herd, flock, and heaps of glittering ore :  
 In every village, schools, though rude, they rear'd,  
 It was not want but ignorance they fear'd ;  
 And of their little largely gave, to ensure  
 Their children's children should be taught tho' poor.

Blest be their memory ! what is man untaught ?  
 Unfit alike for action, or for thought ;  
 Selfish and wretched, ignorant and unjust ;  
 And now by hunger goaded, now by lust :  
 Fraudful not wise, revengeful but not brave,  
 Savage a tyrant, civilised a slave :  
 Much like the brutes that groan beneath his sway,  
 A beast of burthen, or a beast of prey.

Rare though the plant may be and kind the soil,  
 The fruit is worthless unimproved by toil :  
 But tended, train'd through sunshine, gust and shower,  
 The weed's transformed into a radiant flower.

Hard, hard indeed is woman's ceaseless task !  
 E'en from the cradle all her cares we ask :  
 Cares that a mother only can bestow ;  
 A task that only love will undergo !

All must be learnt, and most 'tis hers to teach ;  
 The foot to step, the lip to move in speech.  
 See ! now disdainful of her proffer'd hand,  
 The ambitious boy essays, in vain, to stand !  
 And hark ! the little mimic lisps her name,  
 Vain of success, but failing tinged with shame !  
 With thoughts and feelings heart and mind she sows,  
 And plucks each weed that still, unbidden, blows.  
 Beyond this world too she extends her care,  
 And on her knee unites his hands in prayer.

Soon stronger, bolder, from her arms he flies,  
 Proud to alarm her fears and to despise ;  
 Now at his father's heels, where'er he strays,  
 He learns his sayings and affects his ways :  
 Then come the school, the college, rivals, friends,  
 And but with life man's education ends.

All must conspire—yet all conspire in vain,  
 Unless the State be just, the Church humane :  
 'Tis from the cherish'd Faith and dreaded Law  
 That men their maxims learn, their motives draw,  
 Govern'd by fraud or force a PEOPLE must  
 Be, or become, unfeeling and unjust.

What can avail the nursery and the school,  
 Should priests misguide or magistrates misrule ?  
 To whom can helpless youth, perplex, repair  
 Should precept and example both ensnare ?  
 Setting their busiest hopes and fears at strife  
 With the pure lessons of their early life.  
 Can they esteem their good old teachers wise,  
 Whom thus the learned and the great despise ?  
 Or love their God and neighbour as they ought,  
 Should falsehood as the truth from heav'n be taught ?  
 If endless bliss be promised as the meed  
 Of bigot-zeal, or a presumptuous creed ?  
 And all the terrors of a future world  
 Against the best men found in this be hurl'd ?

But lo ! the clouds disperse, the horizon clears !  
 The sun of science thro' the mist appears ;  
 Pierc'd by its beams the brood obscene of night,  
 With shrieks and murmurs fly the hated light !  
 Long since from this blest isle the foulest fled,  
 A loathsome Band, by Superstition led :  
 And the scar'd Demons of the lagging rear  
 Rise on the wing, soon, soon to disappear.

Knowledge of old in one deep current stream'd,  
 While on its banks the narrow harvest teem'd :  
 All else a thirsty waste of shifting sand,  
 Or curs'd by weeds that chok'd th' uncultur'd land.  
 But now fresh rills break out on every side,  
 Diffusing health and pleasure as they glide,  
 Flowing thro' town and city, village, farm,  
 And lending each a blessing and a charm.

The prophecy's fulfill'd, the poor are taught ;  
 Home to each door the precious gift is brought,  
 TRUTH, to exalt and purify the mind,  
 For where truth comes virtue's not far behind.

Distrustful are the ignorant, fierce, self-will'd,  
 Fickle, yet fix'd their judgments ne'er to yield,  
 Seditious, servile, rash, yet wanting nerve,  
 Easy to dupe, but very hard to serve.

Not thus th' instructed, for though, haply, proud  
 (When self-compared to the benighted crowd)  
 Yet have they ears to learn and eyes to see  
 Their duty, dealt with as men ought to be.

Rarely, if ever, is good given to man  
 Unmix'd with evil, such is Heav'n's high plan !

Yet can there still remain one generous doubt  
 Whether a People with sense, or without,  
 Is happier, better, less disposed to err,  
 Or which an honest statesman must prefer ?

Oh ! 'tis a pleasant dream (if dream it be)  
 Of man the brightening prospects to foresee :  
 Far more of Nature shall he daily know ;  
 Far mightier o'er her powers his mastery grow.  
 How many evils shall become more light !  
 How many more, perhaps, be banish'd quite !  
 How many comforts added to the store  
 That bounteous Providence had given before !  
 Not to the selfish, indolent and blind,  
 Who trust what'er they wish to beg, or find,  
 But only to the wise, who can discern  
 That we are born our happiness to earn.

'Tis well that most are for their bread, each day,  
 Destin'd to toil, as well as taught to pray :  
 And all, of every rank, who would enjoy,  
 Must both their body and their mind employ.

Ye who find nought to love or to admire,  
 Beg, beg of niggard Nature a desire.



Nothing is had for nothing, all is sold,  
 Not to the wealthy only for their gold ;  
 By strenuous action and by patient thought,  
 All our best blessings ever must be bought.

Man seldom fails to o'ertake what he pursues,  
 But 'tis most rare that object well to choose.  
 Could thine be wealth, wake early and watch late,  
 Or, scorning dross, wouldst thou be still more great ?  
 The world's reproaches and thy own despise,  
 Be servile to rule others, creep to rise ;  
 Or wouldst thou fame ? court Science or the Muse,  
 An ardent lover neither can refuse :  
 Be oftener heard in Senates, now to still,  
 Now stir, their charmed Passions at thy Will.  
 To be renown'd some health and life expose,  
 Cross Afric's sands, or pierce the polar-snows,  
 Or in the Field, the bravest of the brave,  
 For glory seek, and find it—in the Grave.

Thy hopes, I know, have a far loftier aim  
 Than riches, rank, vain learning, or a name :  
 Of love, true honour, happiness, the price  
 Is fixed, and must be given—Self-sacrifice.

This, through thy life, has cheerfully been paid,  
 And the rich recompense as freely made.  
 'Tis thine the same just judgment to have shown  
 Of thy lov'd Country's welfare and thine own.  
 Still has it been thy fate—thy choice—to oppose  
 Power and Corruption, formidable foes !  
 And ah ! how few the victories thou hast won !  
 Yet wilt thou deem thyself o'erpaid by one \*.  
 The last, the most desir'd, a victory !  
 Long due to him, who still survives in thee.

Oh ! could even now his generous Spirit feel  
 For Justice, Freedom, but its ancient Zeal,  
 Think with what heart-felt joy he must have view'd  
 Evils that foil'd even him, by thee subdued.  
 One conflict more †, and soon shall all be free,  
 All, all, whate'er their Creed may chance to be.

\* Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.

† Emancipation of the Catholics.

EPITAPH ON MR. HENDERSON\*.

BORN to delight at once and mend the age,  
 Life to adorn, and dignify the stage,  
 No more, oh HENDERSON ! thy magic art  
 Shall wake at will each passion of the heart ;  
 No more thy ardour fire, thy humour cheer,  
 Nor at thy bidding start the obedient tear !  
 No more shall crowds entranc'd scarce breathing see  
 The dreams of Shakespeare realiz'd by thee.  
 Yet, were this all, this loss thy friends might bear,  
 And e'en with pride the general sorrow share,  
 But can they hope again, in one, to find  
 Thy sense and genius, wit and worth, combin'd ?

\* Buried in Westminster Abbey, 3rd December, 1785.

Where shall thy widow'd wife, thy orphan-child

Meet love so warm, authority so mild ?

Alas ! thy fame shall still renew their grief :

And Time itself to them refuse relief.

## THE ROSE.

POET.

SAY, Lovely Rose, so fragrant and so fair !  
Why art thou doom'd these rugged thorns to bear ?  
None sure would steal thee from thy native bower,  
Though smooth thy stem, and silken as thy flower.

ROSE.

Once was I a poor weed, a worthless briar ;  
Till HE, who tun'd thy voice, and strung thy lyre,  
Bade me these soft and blushing leaves to bear,  
And scatter perfume to the summer-air.  
For, as she fled whose love he long had sought,  
Her fluttering garments in my branches caught,  
And she was won to listen to his vows :  
When lo ! these blooms, these odours deck'd my boughs !

POET.

Blest omen, hail ! one opening bud I'll bear  
To grace the obdurate bosom of my Fair :  
Haply he might to thy sweet breath impart  
A subtle virtue to subdue the heart—  
If such thy power I can be grateful too ;  
And thy entrancing scent, thy vermeil hue,  
And this thy story, they shall live in verse,  
And none henceforth thy guard of thorns asperse.

## TRUE PHILOSOPHY.

THERE was an ancient sage, I'm told,  
Who held that "man should weep"  
The doctrine's sour as well as old,  
Not good enough to *keep*.

But for the honour of those times,  
It must be own'd, another  
Maintain'd the tenet of these rhymes,  
And scorn'd his whining brother.

That must be *true* philosophy  
Which bids us smile at Care,  
Since, whether mortals laugh or cry,  
What happens they must bear.

Is there in sighs and tears a power  
To soften stubborn Fate ?  
Or add one unpredestin'd hour  
To our appointed date ?

The turnpike-road to happiness  
Through misery leads, no doubt !  
Though somewhat rough, you must confess,  
And rather round about.

There is a path more smooth and near,  
Trust me, for I have tried ;  
I did not ask my way of Fear,  
Hope is a better guide.

Companion gay ! that ever leads  
Through verdure and through flowers,  
And talks, whene'er the tempest breeds,  
Of sunshine after showers.



Yet dwell not with her, though she toy,  
And promise fair, and woo,  
But win and wed her sister, Joy,  
Still lovelier, and more true.

Youth, like a morning vision, flies :  
Waking we sigh, in vain,  
To close once more our aching eyes,  
And dream it o'er again.

Ah ! still, ye dear illusions, stay !  
Still let me think ye true :  
All the poor certainties of life  
I'll gladly change for you.

Our youth seem'd short because so sweet,  
Then why should we repine ?  
Because we did our breakfast eat  
Must we refuse to dine ?

Fold, Fancy, fold thy busy wing  
 Sleep, troubled Memory, sleep !  
 Why should one fly our cares to bring ?  
 The other wake to weep ?

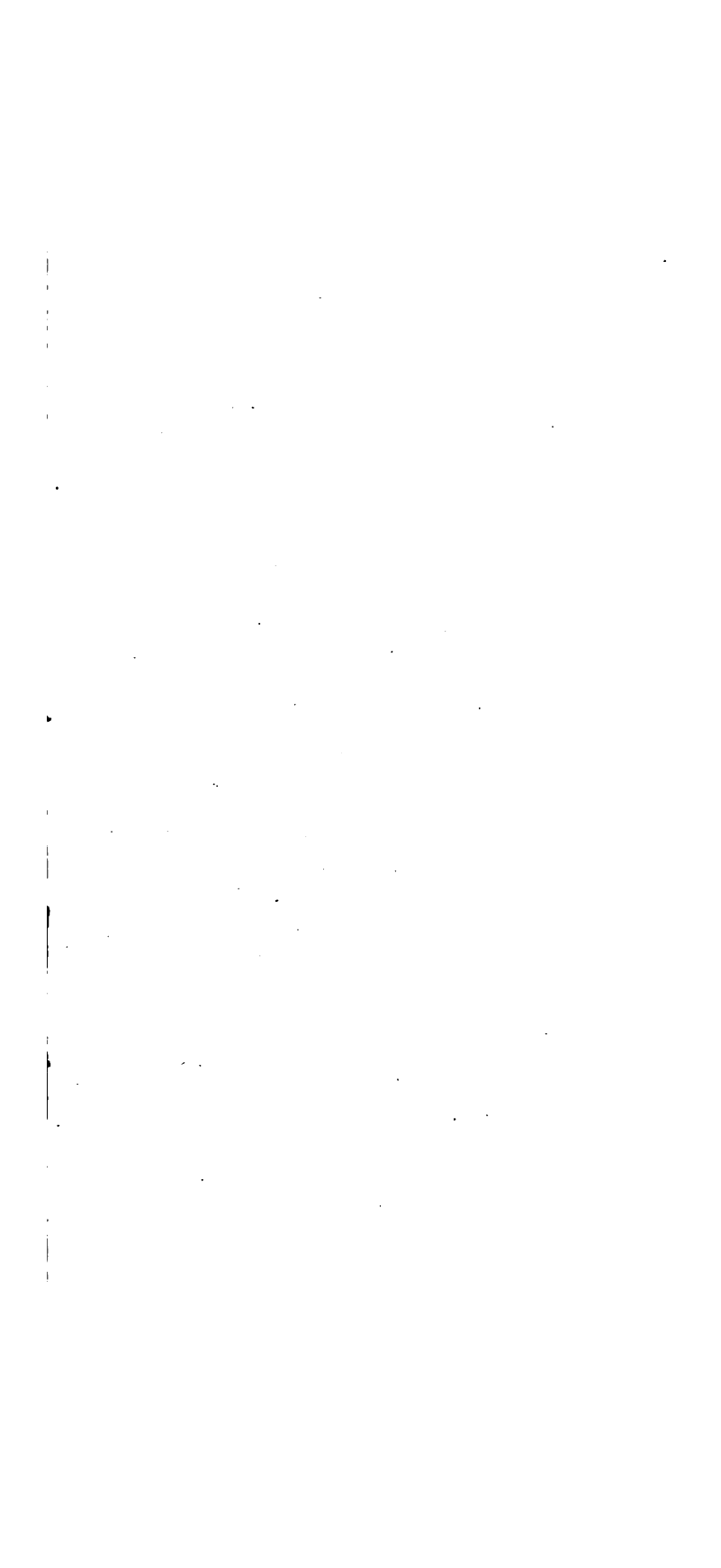
The future is beyond our power,  
 The past we should forget ;  
 We can't afford the present hour  
 Should run away in debt.

'Tis well we yesterday thought so,  
 Aware it could not stay :  
 To-morrow may not come you know,  
 We'll therefore live to-day.

Let not the good, ill-taught, despise  
 These maxims as too gay :  
 Since pleasure in well-doing lies ;  
 'Tis worse than folly to delay.

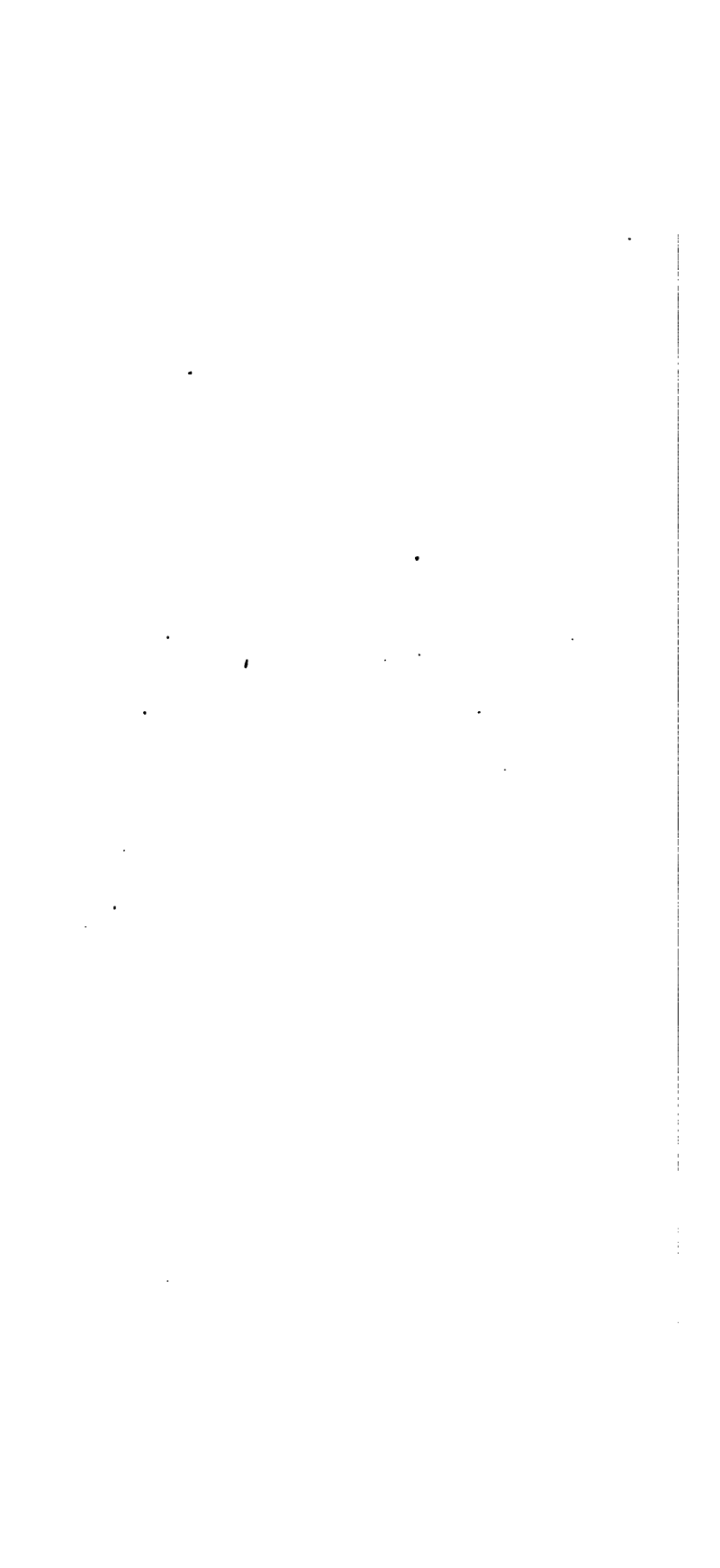
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